

STOURBRIDGE CHRONICLE



Thursday, December 13, 2012

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Memory Lane

Celebrating the great days of the silver screen

Page 8



Saxons win again

Gritty performance from the Stourbridge side gets the points

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Puzzles Extra

Hours of festive fun in our special Christmas pull-out

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28 now on shopping centre's banned list

THE number of trouble-makers banned from the Merry Hill shopping centre in the run-up to Christmas has risen to 28.

More are set to be stopped as police use mobile finger-printing devices and head-mounted cameras.

A clampdown on suspected shoplifters and anti-social behaviour was launched by police and security staff at the Dudley retail complex on November 1.

It is part of a wider Black Country clampdown on criminals at Christmas.

Police officers are increasing their presence in busy shopping centres and towns in the region.

But at Merry Hill they are going a step further, using hi-tech devices to identify and catch the crooks.

Anybody committing a crime can be excluded from the centre immediately for between three months and two years. The initiative, to tackle the expected seasonal increase in retail crime, was set up by police and Dudley's Business Crime Partnership.

Police and security staff patrolling the Merry Hill Centre are using head-cams to deter offenders and capture filmed evidence.

And they are using a mobile ID system - a BlackBerry phone linked to a fingerprint reading device - so they can quickly check that someone they have stopped is who they say they are.

Fire reveals drug factory

FIREFIGHTERS uncovered a cannabis farm while tackling a blaze at a house in Lye. The drugs factory was found in the loft of the property in Vicarage Road at 9.05 on Monday night.

Crews were called out after smoke was spotted pouring out of the house.

It is believed the cause was an electrical fault. A man was seen running away from the scene when firefighters arrived.

RUBBISH MOUNTAIN DEADLINE WELCOMED

Report by Alex Ross

A DECISION to give a waste management firm seven months to clear a mountain of rubbish has been welcomed by environment bosses.

The firm, Refuse Derived Fuel Ltd, has been given the time for the clean-up at its site in Brierley Hill under a ruling from the High Court.

Death of popular football manager

MEMBERS of Stourbridge FC are mourning the loss of the Under-11s' well-loved manager Darren Owen who has died.

The father-of-two who lived in Dudley, died on Saturday evening.

In a message on Stourbridge FC's website, Simon Westwood, team administrator for the Under-11s said: "All of our thoughts and prayers are with Darren's family, Becky, Luke and Joe, at this tragic time. Darren was a great manager but most importantly a great person."

"Darren was not in football for self gain, he was in it foremost for the kids."

"The kids absolutely adored him and many of them have said that he is the best manager they have played under."

He added: "We would like to thank all the people and other clubs, managers and coaches who have passed their condolences."

"It is much appreciated by us all at Stourbridge FC."

It must clear all rubbish and baled waste from its Moor Street base by July 10. The pile of waste was as high as 40ft in August last year, with residents claiming it blighted the area.

It has now been reduced to around 23ft.

Environment Agency manager David Hudson said he understood residents may be frustrated at the delay, but the scale of the job meant it would take time.

He said it meant all the waste would be cleared.

He added: "We will be checking that the material is taken to a legitimate disposal site and will keep residents informed about progress."

Progress

Under the ruling, the front of the site must be cleared of rubbish by March 29.

Then there has to be a full clearance by the July date.

Nick Cole, representing the Environment Agency, said an application could be made to extend the time limit because of bad weather but a further hearing would be held at the High Court on July 15 to review progress and to consider court costs.

If the company does not comply with the injunction, and its director, Robert McNaughton, could be fined, sent to prison, or have their assets seized.

Santa joins cyclists on charity ride



Stourbug members join Santa at Mary Stevens Park, Stourbridge, for their Christmas charity bike ride

SANTA and his helpers left Rudolph at home and took to pedal power for a charity ride.

About 60 members of Stourbridge-based cycling group Stourbug joined Santa to pedal the 25-mile round trip from Stourbridge's Mary Stevens Park to The Island Pool pub, Caunsall, near Kidderminster.

Their scenic route wound its way through Hagley, Holy Cross, Belbroughton, Broome, Churchill, and Cookley.

Organiser Andy Glazzard, aged 51, said that the group made quite a sight as they cycled through the region.

"It was a brilliant day and everyone got into the spirit of it," he said. "Lots of people

were giving us cheques and money all day so we hope we have raised a good amount."

Money from the event will be donated to Stourbridge's Mary Stevens Hospice.

Stourbug chairman John Plant said: "Each year Stourbug and its members support charities through sponsored rides, and other events."

"One family cycled from Lands End to John O' Groats raising £1,600 for Parkinson's Disease, another member did the same ride and raised £2,500 for The Teenage Cancer Trust. Our support for Mary Stevens Hospice is another example of how our club contributes to the local community and charities."



Front, left to right, Jodie Murrell, Andy Glazzard and Julie Plant, ready to ride

Family in tribute to victim of car crash

THE grieving family of a Kingswinford woman who died in a crash near Kidderminster have paid tribute to their "angel".

Samantha Jennings, known as Sam, died at the scene of the crash on the A449 at Cookley, near Kidderminster, in the early hours of Saturday.

The 26-year-old mother-of-two was a former pupil of the Glynn Primary School and Summerhill School.

She had two boys and worked as a care assistant, looking after adults with disabilities.

Her family said: "Sam was a caring person, an angel. She was a much-loved mother, daughter, sister, and grand-daughter, and we are broken hearted."

"Sam was vivacious, a party girl who lived life to the full. She had the world at her feet, and was so happy. She leaves us the legacy of her two little boys and she will be forever in our thoughts and in our hearts."

She was a front seat passenger in a black Vauxhall Astra which left the road and hit a tree, near the Island Pool pub.

A 22-year-old man was taken to the Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham with two broken legs and a broken pelvis. A rear seat passenger, a 24-year-old man, was taken to hospital with minor injuries.

Witnesses should call 0300 333 3000.

Warning on homes plan

A WARNING has been issued that it would be disastrous if plans to build 175 homes in Hagley went ahead.

Paul Davies, who lives in the village and is proprietor of Dudley-based architects and surveyors the Simms Davies Partnership, has described the plan to build on land owned by Lord Cobham as "countryside rape and devastation".

Cala Homes have declined to comment.

● Full story - Page 5

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CONTACT US

Have you got a story or an event you would like covered? The Chronicle and the Express & Star have a team of reporters based in Stourbridge who can help:

Tom Mason: 01902 319466
tom.mason@expressandstar.co.uk

Charlotte Lilley: 01902 319490
charlotte.lilley@expressandstar.co.uk

Will Ackermann: 01384 353213
will.ackermann@expressandstar.co.uk

Heather Large: 01384 353203
heather.large@expressandstar.co.uk

Adam Burling: 01384 353209
adam.burling@expressandstar.co.uk

Louise Jew: 01384 353201
louise.jew@expressandstar.co.uk

Andrew Turton: 01384 353202
andrew.turton@expressandstar.co.uk

Lee Watton: 01384 353230
l.watton@expressandstar.co.uk

We are always keen to hear about your news or views.
Email your information and pictures to
stourbridge.chrons@expressandstar.co.uk

Advertising:
Rebecca Vincze 01384 399901
r.vincze@expressandstar.co.uk

Colin Bailey (Property) 01922 444331
c.bailey@expressandstar.co.uk

Andy Mullett (Motoring) 01384 353256
a.mullett@expressandstar.co.uk

Classified 01902 317878
my-classified@expressandstar.co.uk

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Firm launches national skills academy

THE Stourbridge-based Western Region of construction services company Mansell has launched a National Skills Academy for Construction.

Mayor and Mayoress of Dudley, Councillor Melvyn Mottram and Michelle Mottram, were among guests at the launch at Stourbridge College. Presentations were given by Mansell skills co-ordinator Shazad Ahmed,

Mansell regional managing director Steve Davies, and Judy Lowe, deputy chairman of CITB-Construction Skills.

Clients and stakeholders were told about the programme's plans to support training in the West Midlands, and Mansell trainees Ben Shakespeare and Stephen Lediard, talked about their experiences.

Mansell was awarded National

Skills Academy status earlier this year. The company will support local people by offering training at all levels, delivered on-site rather than through pre-established training courses.

● Pictured are Mansell training manager Jeremy Lydiatt, right, with mayor and mayoress of Dudley, Councillor and Mrs Melvyn Mottram and Mansell regional MD Steve Davies



20mph speed limit idea for town's Old Quarter

MORE than 50 streets in one part of Stourbridge could have a 20mph speed limit if residents get their way.

Dozens of people who live in the Old Quarter in Stourbridge attended a campaign meeting last week, calling for the new speed restriction. The 20mph limit is one idea out of many put forward to improve the look and safety of the quarter, which covers an area stretching for more than a mile.

Nativity play is to be seen by thousands

THOUSANDS of people are expected to flock to see Kinver's singers and actors perform the nativity story.

The performance, run by Churches Together to promote the village's late-night shopping, will see camels and a donkey join the outdoor play.

Spokesman Suzanne Smith said the village's main bus stop would also be getting in on the act as it was taken over and made to look like the stable where Jesus was born.

She added: "It will be cold but I think this is the sixth time we've done this and we have always been lucky with the weather."

"We're trying to bring the Christ back into Christmas and we got a few thousands people along to watch it last year."

The nativity story will be sung by the 20-strong St Peter's Church choir and acted by a team of 22 from the Methodist church.

The High Street's big night is tomorrow (Friday) which will begin with Father Christmas arriving at 5.15pm before the nativity performance at 7.15pm.

Councillor Ian Marrey said: "We have set up a working party. It will work at some ideas, including the 20mph limit, before putting them to officers at Dudley Council."

He added: "The streets in the area are very narrow and people want the lower speed limit to improve safety."

"People hit by a car at 20mph are much more likely to survive than those hit at 30mph. The danger is worsened by the amount of off-street parking. It is one idea of many we're considering. They also include one-way streets and possible road blocks."

Survey

The campaign was started by the late Wollaston and Stourbridge Town councillor Malcolm Knowles.

He carried out a survey on the 20mph speed limit proposal and found 90 per cent of residents asked would want the new restriction.

The town's old quarter's boundaries are Worcester Street, South Road, Enville Street and Highpark Avenue.

Councillor Marrey, who works for a trade union, invited Enville-based Phil Jones to talk at the meeting.

Mr Jones, who runs a transport planning consultant firm, talked through some of the ideas with the residents.

Stourbridge Township Council Chairman Margaret Scott welcomed the campaign, but questioned the viability of the 20mph limit.

Diamond couple celebrate



Olwyn and William Whitehouse celebrating their diamond wedding anniversary

A COUPLE who almost failed to wed due to a mix-up, celebrated 60 years of marriage.

Olwyn and William Whitehouse turned up at St Mary's Church, Kingswinford, for their wedding on November 22, 1952, but the church had put the names of William's brother and future wife on the wedding banns instead of their own.

Luckily the vicar had a remedy and the wedding went ahead.

They marked their diamond anniversary with a party with their children, Carol aged 57 and John, 53, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Mr and Mrs Whitehouse, now 84 and 82, met at a dance in 1950. He got his brother, Harry, to ask her if he could walk her home, and she accepted.

The couple live in Oak Street, Kingswinford.

Theatre campaign wins new backing

A CAMPAIGN to save a former theatre from demolition has been boosted after leading councillors paid a visit and said they hoped it could be preserved.

The Friends of Dudley Hippodrome asked borough councillors to tour the building to see the potential for themselves. The art deco 1,752-seater auditorium in Castle Hill hosted greats like Bob Hope, Laurel and Hardy and Tommy Cooper. It was closed in 2009 after operating as a bingo hall.

But it is facing the bulldozers. Dudley Council wants to tear it down as part of wider plans to regenerate the Castle Hill area.

Yesterday the Friends group gave 10 councillors a tour of the building and discussed their bid to reopen it as a community theatre.

Cabinet member Councillor Gaye Partridge who attended, said: "It is a lovely building. When you talk to the campaigners about it, it is very difficult not to get inspired. I wish them well."

Councillor Hillary Bills said: "If the project could get off the ground it would be wonderful."

The Friends group has a business plan to reopen and run the theatre as a community arts venue.

Paedophile appeal bid is rejected

A PAEDOPHILE who was jailed for assaulting two young boys has lost an appeal against his minimum jail term.

Mark Colin Dixon, aged 28, of Blackacre Road, Dudley, was sentenced to imprisonment for public protection at Wolverhampton Crown Court in August for rape and attempted rape.

He was also ordered to serve a minimum of six years behind bars before applying for release, but yesterday he challenged the length of that term at the Court of Appeal.

Giving judgment, Mr Justice Mackay said that, although Dixon's crimes were isolated incidents, they were committed in "horrific" circumstances.

His lawyers argued the six years he must serve before he can be assessed for release was too tough but the appeal was dismissed.

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Cheesey clue to break-in

A BURGLAR who stole £2,000 worth of computer equipment from a college for students with learning disabilities was brought to justice after being caught with a lump of cheese he had taken from the canteen fridge, a court heard.

Shane Smith, aged 23, stole the machine from Stourbridge College's horticultural and catering centre, in Leasowes Lane, Halesowen.

He was linked to the raid on April 16 through fingerprints. Wolverhampton Crown Court was told. When police searched his home two weeks later they discovered the cheese in his fridge.

Smith, of Haden Road, Cradley Heath, was handed a six-month prison sentence suspended for two years. Miss Rhiannon Jones, prosecuting, said Smith originally claimed he had only taken the lump of cheese.

The court was told he was accompanied by two other men, who have not been identified. Smith, who admitted burglary, was also ordered to pay £1,000 compensation, and must complete an alcohol treatment programme.

Judge Nicholas Webb told him: "This was a mean offence involving a not insignificant amount of property that has not been recovered."

Crash man in stable condition

THE driver of a stolen car which smashed into a bus stop in Wordsley, is in a stable condition, police have said.

The man, who is in his 20s, was taken to hospital with multiple serious injuries following the crash in the High Street on Saturday morning at 2am.

He was initially in a critical condition at Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham, but police have said his condition is now stable.

The man had to be freed from the car by firefighters following the incident. It is believed he hit a stationary car before striking the bus stop.

Police believe the vehicle, a Ford Ka, had been taken in a car jacking in Greenbanks Gardens just minutes before the crash.

Pair who went on burglary spree are jailed



Robert Smith



Stuart Salt

TWO prolific burglars who targeted 12 homes and stole four vehicles between them during a month-long crime spree were each jailed for more than three years.

Stuart Salt and Robert Smith targeted properties across the Dudley borough, taking more than £10,000 worth of TVs, computers and electrical items.

And Smith stole a £15,000 Hyundai car from a petrol forecourt in Asda, Brierley Hill, while the owner was buying fuel.

Wolverhampton Crown Court heard the pair, who both have children, used the same white van at most of the burglaries and even backed it on to the drive of one property in

Copple Road, Coseley. Salt, of Overbrook Close, Gornal Wood, and Smith, of Bilston Road, Monmore Green, Wolverhampton, were both arrested over the raid in Copple Road and another in Havacre Lane, Coseley.

But Warren Stanier, prosecuting, told Wolverhampton Crown that they then admitted a catalogue of other offences between September 18 and October 15.

They broke into four properties on October 15 alone.

One victim Vincent Wilde said in a statement that the burglary had left him feeling "powerless to protect his home and family". In total the pair admitted burgling six

homes together, and attempting to burgle three, while Smith also admitted a further burglary and attempted burglary, as well as three thefts of motor vehicles.

Salt, 31, was jailed for 40 months, with four months for a separate charge of handling a stolen mobile phone, while 29-year-old Smith got 44 months. Salt was also given six points on his licence for driving without insurance.

Judge Nicholas Webb told them: "You both went on something of a spree. People like you should understand the sentimental value of items often dwarfs their financial worth."

CCTV captures 'caveman' rescuing victim of assault

IN bizarre scenes, a partygoer dressed as a caveman and holding a club went to the aid of a man being attacked in Stourbridge town centre.

The unusual drama was captured by CCTV cameras and the footage was released by police trying to find the assailant. The victim, a 31-year-old man, had been drinking at a pub where a fancy dress party was being held. As he came out of the Mitre Inn in Lower High Street, just after 1.30am, he was followed into High Street, where he was pounced on.

He was pushed to the ground, kicked in the stomach and punched in the face.

Footage of the attack shows two men in costumes, including one dressed as a caveman, running to his rescue.

The attacker was pulled away from the injured man and walked out of view of the camera.

The victim was knocked unconscious and suffered injuries to his head and nose.

Police released the CCTV pictures to try to trace his attacker.

Costume

DC John Horrobin, from the major investigation team in Dudley, said: "In the footage you will see a couple of people in fancy dress.

"There had been a fancy dress party at the Mitre Inn and we are appealing to anyone who may have seen the victim to come forward.

"The victim has little recollection of the attack and thankfully he will make a full recovery."

The assault happened on October 27.

Anyone who can help is urged to contact DC Horrobin by calling 101, or the Crimestoppers hotline on 0800 555 111.

See the video at www.expressandstar.com



Attack - the victim is kicked on the ground



Rescue - the caveman comes to the man's aid

Blaze man rescued

A MAN was rescued from his smoke-filled flat after a chip pan caught fire.

Fire crews broke into the ground-floor flat in Stourbridge Road, Brierley Hill, to find the man lying on his bed. A chip pan left on the cooker had ignited, sparking flames in the kitchen. Thick smoke had filled the other rooms at the flat.

The firefighters used breathing apparatus to find the man, believed to be in his 40s. A neighbour had raised the alarm at around 3.30pm on Saturday after their fire alarm was activated.

Departures hit cafe

A TEA room on the doorstep of Wordsley's Red House Glass Cone has closed, just months after opening. The operators of the Crystal Tea Rooms left for personal reasons, Dudley Council says. Donna Bosworth, James Shields and Terri Clements opened the site in August.

The council is now looking for new tenants, and the deadline for applications is December 17. Councillor Tracy Wood, cabinet member for culture said the tea room operated as a private business. She added: "We are advertising for a new tenant to take up the lease."

NEWS

in brief

Skate-off aiming to boost charity

SHOPPERS are asked to put on their novelty Christmas jumpers and head to an ice rink at Dudley's Merry Hill Centre tomorrow (Friday).

The centre hosts its first Christmas jumper skate-off in aid of Save the Children.

The charity is encouraging people to wear a Christmas jumper on December 14 and donate money to the charity.

The aim is to get as many people as possible on the ice from 10 to 11am that day, with their Christmas jumpers.

Church invite to Christmas fair

A CHRISTMAS fair will be held in aid of a campaign to repair and reopen a Dudley Church. It will take place at the Quality Hotel at 6.30pm-9.30pm on December 19.

Money will go toward restoration at St John's Church in Kates Hill. Dudley Members of the St John's Church Preservation Group want permission from the diocese to take on responsibility for the building. Admission is 50p for adults and free for children.

Man tried to steal meat from store

AN unemployed alcoholic tried to steal meat from a Dudley, shop, a court heard.

John Stanway, aged 58, of Brooklyn Grove, Coseley, was stopped leaving a Co-op with £25 worth of unpaid-for gammon. At Dudley Magistrates' Court last week, Stanway admitted a theft. The case was adjourned for sentencing on January 9.

Cinema chains in £47.3m deal

CINEWORLD has bought smaller rival cinema chain Picturehouse in a deal worth £47.3 million.

It will add Picturehouse's 21 city centre cinemas to the 80 sites run by Cineworld in the UK, including the multiplex at Bentley Bridge in Wednesfield. Picturehouse is the UK's leading independent cinema operator.

New cars sell well

NEW car registrations rose 11.3 per cent in November thanks to private sales. A total of 149,191 cars were sold in the UK, compared to 134,027 last year, the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders said.

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NEWS

THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



THANKS for the suggestion but William and Kate are not going to call the kid Josey Wales.

□□□□□□□□

AND now a few words on the health benefits of being a lardere: "If she (Kate) wasn't so damn skinny she'd have a bit of fat to cope with the weight loss and dehydration. She doesn't, hence the need to hospitalise her as her thinness increases her risk factor." (From Sky News website, where all opinions are equally valid).

□□□□□□□□

REJOICE, for the law will be changed to prevent females being discriminated against in the succession to the British Crown. Whatever sex it happens to be, William and Kate's baby will one day be monarch, because it will be the oldest of their children. Is that fair? By automatically crowning the oldest kid, we are swapping one form of discrimination (sexism) for another (ageism). Why should the second or third child not be monarch? How dare the system deny them the top job just because, by an accident of history, they are younger? If my argument strikes you as nonsense today, bear in mind that the very idea of sexually-equal succession would have seemed treason, or even heresy, only 50 years ago. William and Kate's child is unlikely to take the throne for another half-century and you can bet your life that our views and values that seem so reasonable to us in 2012 will seem bonkers to our great-great grandchildren.

□□□□□□□□

ACTUALLY, the best and most traditional way to choose the monarch is for the rival claimants to assemble about 20,000 terrified peasants each on a bit of open ground (Edgehill, Towton, etc) and command them to bash each other's brains out. Winner takes all.

□□□□□□□□

A READER writes: "If journalists are instructed to support one political group over another, is that freedom of the Press or a form of journalistic dictatorship?"

Actually, it is freedom of the Press. It is the freedom of any editor or proprietor to support any political party they choose. The journalist is free to work for any newspaper he likes. The readers are free to buy newspapers that reflect their politics.

Many British newspapers, both national and regional, were born out of political activism and the desire to change the world. That is why we have such a rich and varied Press. Television broadcasters are bound by law to be politically balanced, and are overseen by Ofcom. Newspapers are free of such rules but we have plenty of enemies who would relish the Press being brought under Ofcom's control.

"Political balance" has a sweet, reasonable ring but it is the antithesis of a free Press. And if we went down that road, with every column inch analysed for political bias and balance, Britain would only need one newspaper. We could call it Truth or as they say in Russia, Pravda.

□□□□□□□□

A SURVEY reveals that more than two-thirds of workers are embarrassed by their jobs and lie to make them sound more interesting. I had a pal who got a job putting up "for sale" signs for an estate agent. He called himself an information technologist.

Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star

Screening initiative is a life-saver

TWO men had life-saving treatment after a new health screening programme found they had monster-sized bulges in their main arteries.

Chemical plant worker Roger Davies, of Woodsetton, had a swelling 10.5cm across – the largest of any abdominal aortic aneurysm detected so far in the screen-

ing initiative. And Wolverhampton postal worker Tom Walker, whose aneurysm measured 7.5cm, said: "I was a ticking time bomb."

Mr Davies and Mr Walker recovered after surgery at Dudley's Russells Hall Hospital. Mr Davies and Mr Walker, both 64, are among 2,000 men from Walsall,

Wolverhampton and Dudley who have taken up the offer of an ultrasound scan to check for an aneurysm.

Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust began screening men in their 65th year in June.

About 5,000 men will be invited for screening in the first year.

Mr Walker, of Moat Green Avenue, Wednesfield, a father of three, said: "I knew I was in good hands."

Mr Davies, a father-of-two, said: "I wouldn't be alive today if I hadn't gone for a scan."

Men over 65 can refer themselves for a scan on 01384 321125.



Patient Roger Davies

An extra bedroom could cost £28,674

FAMILIES in the West Midlands looking to move to a bigger home can expect to pay just over the UK national average in order to take the next step up the property ladder, according to new research.

With nearly two-thirds of West Midlands homeowners planning to move house within the next three years, and more than two thirds wanting a bigger home, they're going to have to dig deep to fulfill their dreams.

A study by Barclays of 50,000 mortgage applications found that West Midlands homeowners looking to move from a one to a two-bedroom property can expect to pay an average of £28,674 – just over the national average cost.

Those looking to take the next step up the property ladder can expect to pay, on average, £41,873 for that third bedroom.

This price difference doubles again with a move from three to four bedrooms.

In contrast, people living in the North East can expect to face a price increase of just £10,000 to move from a one to a two-bed home whereas Londoners can expect to pay four times the average, at £91,000.

Student's poetry is praised

BRIERLEY Hill student Rosie Paley has been praised by TV and sports stars at an award ceremony for the Encephalitis Society.

Olympian Rebecca Adlington, Emmerdale actor Matthew Bose and Coronation Street star Bill Ward were all at the charity event.

Rosie, who goes to Halesowen College, was short-listed from 90 entrants for a poem and art work showing how encephalitis, which is an acute inflammation of the brain, had affected her life.

The 17-year-old came runner-up in the art category. Proud mother Helen said: "All the stars spent a lot of time with Rosie praising her poem and art."

Rosie, an ex-pupil at Wordsley School, is studying a BTEC Level Two in Women's Hairdressing.

Beauty spot angling ban is set to be lifted

ANGLERS who have been banned from a pool at a beauty spot for two years will be allowed to start fishing there again.

The pool, at the 67-hectare Leasowes site in Halesowen, was closed to anglers so that the area surrounding it could recover from what was described as overuse. Concerns were also raised after two ducks became caught in fishing lines and died. Dudley Council has now declared the area has recovered.

Although they will continue to monitor the site, anglers will be welcomed back early next year.

Councillor Tracy Wood, cabinet member for environment and culture, said: "We hope to meet anglers' representatives in January and, following this meeting, we will be announcing our plans for the re-introduction of fishing to The Leasowes in 2013."

She added: "The Leasowes is a beautiful historic landscape and it is important that it feels open and accessible to all whether dog walkers, bird watchers, golfers, anglers, or just families enjoying a day out.

Reaction
"Thanks to the support of responsible anglers during this temporary suspension, the delicate balance of the pools has been restored."

Fishing would again be allowed at four spots and it is hoped there would be none of the littering and night fishing that prompted the ban.

Campaigners were tight-lipped when asked for their reaction to the lifting on the ban.

Marianne Diller, of Friends of the Leasowes, refused to comment, and Marion Harvey, who had previously been outspoken against the lifting of the ban, would not comment over the phone.

The Leasowes pool is one of three council-managed pools in the borough.

More than 1,000 children at three schools submitted designs.

Louise's skydive for school



Louise Foster, with brother Alex Foster, Marcus Ridgway and Tom Bennett

A FUNDRAISER took part in a charity sky dive to raise cash for the school caring for her disabled younger brother.

Brave 21-year-old Louise Foster skydived from 13,000ft over Oxford in July and this week presented a cheque for the £1,020 she raised to Pens Meadow School, Stourbridge.

Miss Foster, of Dudley's Milking Bank Estate, was given the skydive for her 21st birthday earlier this year.

The Toni and Guy salon worker said: "It was an emotional day and I was so nervous but it was the best feeling and was for a good cause."

Miss Foster's inspiration was her younger brother Alex, 18, who has attended Pens Meadow School since the age of three.

The money will be used to buy sensory equipment at the Brierley Hill Road school.

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The Island Breakfast Special Sausage, Bacon, Ham, Mushrooms, Black Pudding, Beans, Cheddar, Mozzarella	£4.49	£5.49
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£500,000 Australia deal for company

A COMPUTER software company based in Stourbridge has scooped a contract worth more than £500,000 in Australia.

The deal means that Chrysalis-Solmotive will be helping a carmaker in Australia look for new customers.

Working with the Government's export arm, UK Trade and Investment, the firm adapted its software to suit potential customers in Australia.

The move paid off when the firm landed a three-year contract with the international division of an automotive manufacturer's finance company worth \$40,000 Australian dollars (£548,000).

Since then Chrysalis-Solmotive, which has offices in Market Street, Stourbridge, has expanded its operations from two employees, to 20.

Chrysalis's Renewal Manager is a web-based program that can help users identify areas of interest of customers to help them target future clients, and retain existing ones.

The software can help companies sell more cars and shorten vehicle ownership cycles.

Spokesman Paul Bennett said: "Building a business in tough economic conditions is a challenge, but by displaying good financial sense and a product that holds real value, there is funding available."

Christmas crafts at museums

PEOPLE can get crafty for Christmas at Stourbridge's Red House Glass Cone and Broadfield House Glass Museum.

Adults can make their own glass decorations at the Cone. Equipment and guidance is provided at 10.30am-12.30pm or 1.30pm-3.30pm on Saturday, for £21 each.

Pre-booking and payment in advance is needed on 01384 815571.

At Broadfield House there is an adults Christmas crafts session on December 21, at 10.15am-1pm.

Sessions are £5.25 and people can make decorations including angels, felt baubles and Christmas trees.

Supermarket will transform eyesore site



An artist's impression of the new supermarket

THIS is how a new supermarket which is expected to create hundreds of jobs will look.

An artist's impression of the supermarket which will replace an eyesore block in Dudley has been released. With striking floor-to-ceiling glass walls and curved architecture, the images show how the development would transform the site.

Cavendish Quarter Properties Ltd wants to build the superstore and petrol station

where Cavendish House stands in Trindle Road.

Residents have been calling for the unsightly building to be knocked down.

The images, released by the developer, show how the office block would be replaced with a modern structure with landscaped areas and an adjoining car park.

The proposals, which would create up to 300 full and part-time jobs, have been recommended for approval by

council planning officers. They have backed the scheme saying it will bring employment to the town and revamp a partially derelict site, which has been earmarked for regeneration.

Under the plans, Cavendish House will be knocked down and the site, as well as neighbouring land, will be cleared to make way for the store and petrol station.

A total of 402 parking spaces would be created partly under-

neath the store and on two decked levels. It would be operated as a free car park, limited to a two hour maximum stay. It is not yet known which store chain would move to the site.

The scheme is one of three proposed new supermarkets in the town centre.

Avenbury has also lodged plans for the Cavendish House site while Commercial Estates Group wants to build a store where Falcon House now stands.

Warning on 'disastrous' beauty spot homes plan

AN architect has warned that a change in the view from a popular beauty spot in Hagley would be disastrous if plans for 175 new homes went ahead.

Paul Davies, who lives in the village, said the proposal to build on land owned by Lord Cobham in the foothills of Clent was "countryside rape and devastation".

Vicar gets a driving ban after accident

A VICAR has been banned from driving after he accidentally reversed his car on to the pavement and hit a bystander in Dudley.

Reverend John Bennett, aged 76, had left his automatic car in reverse with the handbrake on in Birmingham Road, Stourbridge, on July 16.

Lynda Gudgeon, prosecuting, said: "When he got inside, he planted his foot down and the car mounted the footpath."

The car trapped Diana Horton between a skip and a barrier, she said. Mrs Horton suffered injury to her leg and spent five weeks on crutches.

Mrs Gudgeon added that the defendant had had difficulty comprehending that he'd been in an accident and had been confused."

Bennett, of Quarry Road Dudley, appeared before magistrates supported by a crutch. He had pleaded guilty to careless driving at a previous hearing.

Magistrates gave him a six month ban, a £100 fine with £85 costs and a £15 victim surcharge.

Villagers are incensed by the scheme, submitted by Cala Homes, which they say would overload Hagley's amenities and would add to traffic problems.

It was due to be debated by Bromsgrove planning committee on Monday but the application was deferred after a last-minute legal challenge from Hagley and Clent parish councils.

Mr Davies, proprietor of Dudley-based architects and building surveyors the Simms Davies Partnership, said the development would effectively mean building a "new village" in the shadow of the Clent Hills.

He has produced a computer-generated image of the view from the Clent Hills now and what the same scene would look like with the new development.

He captions the view of the new homes, as: "countryside rape and devastation." Mr Davies said: "The scale of the application is alarming. Lord Cobham and Cala's proposals, and now supplementary applications, will constitute the most significant change to the locality ever."

Mr Davies estimates that Lord Cobham stands to make £10 million from the sale of the land, with the Cala Homes' share of the development being more than £25 million. Lord Cobham said he expected to raise at least £5 million.

Cala Homes declined to comment.

'Mother of the community' reaches 105



Elsie Bell, grand-daughter Kim Brookes, top left, daughter Georgina Brookes, grandson Karl Brookes, great grand-daughter Lauren Saa and sister June Wright

A WOMAN known as "a mother of the community" who knitted clothes for hundreds of babies on her estate celebrated her 105th birthday.

Elsie Bell was joined by four generations of her family for a tea party.

Her daughter Georgina Brookes, 70, of Edinburgh Close, Wordsley, said: "She loved to knit, and knit she did for hundreds of babies on our estate. She had a cleaning job and brought me up, but she still made time in to help others. She was the mother of the community."

Mrs Bell, who now lives at a nursing home in West Bromwich, was born in that town, one of eight children of coal miner Thomas Wright and wife Leah.

She married miner George Bell in 1930 at St James Hill Top Church and then lived in Crankhall Lane. They moved with their daughter to Friar Park, and Mr Bell died in 1982.

Mrs Brookes said: "I think my mother has lived so long because of her active mind. She was never one to do nothing."



Elsie Bell at 15. She kept active, says her daughter

NEWS

in brief

Footpath to get resurfacing work

IMPROVEMENTS are to be carried out to a footpath in the village of Belbroughton, near Stourbridge.

Belbroughton Parish Council has ordered the work on the path from the village's recreation ground to its school.

The work, likely to take place next week, will involve resurfacing the top layer of the path for about 40 metres and reinforcing two eroded areas of the surrounding bank.

By-election date is set by council

A BY-ELECTION will be held on January 31 to fill a council seat left vacant by the death of long-serving Stourbridge councillor Malcolm Knowles.

Candidate lists for the Wollaston and Stourbridge Town ward of Dudley Council were expected to be finalised this week.

Councillor Knowles, a former mayor of Dudley, died in October aged 79.

Hundreds of people turned out to pay their final respects at service of thanksgiving.

Pupils fundraise for Africa school

STUDENTS at Stourbridge's Ridgewood High School have been busy raising money towards building a new school in a poor village in The Gambia.

The Student Voice charity Taskforce organised the week, which included play your cards right, hook a duck, raffles and cake sales, as well as a netball match against teachers.

Woman hurt as car hits house

AN elderly woman was taken to hospital with leg injuries last week after her car hit a house in Tivdale. The crash happened in Baby Cone.

The woman was freed from the vehicle by the fire service and taken to Russells Hall Hospital in Dudley by ambulance.

Horse hold-up

TRAFFIC was brought to a standstill last week by a sick horse. Cars queued on the A491 in Kingswinford near the junction with Brierley Hill Road after police closed the road last Wednesday. An ill horse in a horsebox was blocking the road.

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LETTERS

People need help against media barons

I HAVE a somewhat ambivalent view on governmental control of the Press.

Even though it now seems that this would be, in cricketer terms, a kind of 'long stop', there are always reasons why our freedoms depend upon some conduit for free speech.

In homing in on the despicable actions of certain sections of the Press, specifically phone hacking, we should never forget the importance of the media in highlighting problems with the establishment, public services, big business etc and in fact we should be careful when legislating for an organ which calls government to account.

The Press should not be rendered impotent to criticise this august body. Government control may start in a small way but this may, over a period of years be the thin end of a very nasty wedge. I would also point out that there are powers already of a criminal nature to control the excesses.

The problem in hacking was not Press control, it was the fact that the police, judiciary and other arms of the establishment turned a blind eye or were complicit in what was going on.

There is one area which I feel does need to be brought under control however. This is one which would prop-

erly protect from defamatory articles, people who do not have either the knowledge or indeed the funds to battle Press barons. The wishy-washy apology of two lines hidden away on page 28 is not good enough. What is needed in this respect is a body positioned well away from the Press, and in no way resembling the present useless Press Complaints set up, to which ordinary people can turn. This body would have the statutory power to enable people to fully publicise their position in the offending newspaper.

ALAN M. ETHERIDGE,
Catholic Lane, Dudley

Freedom of the Press paramount for society

I WRITE with regard to the arguments raging both for and against the possibility of legally enforced press restrictions.

I am firmly of the opinion it would be a huge retrograde step to curb the power of the Press as to render it so toothless as to be continually looking over its shoulder, and to be consulting its legal representatives, even before putting thoughts into words.

I have always been under the impression this little island of ours was a democracy, and fully believe the freedom of the Press is of paramount importance to democracy.

If these draconian measures were to indeed become enshrined in law, I can it being a backwards step. What happened to - I may not agree with what you say but I will defend with my life your right to say it?

B. PARSONS
Millard Road, Coseley

LETTERS to the Editor

POST

Stourbridge Chronicle, Chronicle Editorial, 51-53 Queen Street, Wolverhampton WV1 1ES

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number of the writer. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

E-MAIL

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Not a big fan of the mobility scooters

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There will be no road tax to pay, no insurance, and definitely no safety equipment to buy. What could be more exhilarating? It may be that over time you notice a slight wasting of the muscles in your legs, or you may suffer from shortage of breath - do not worry. Just pop along to your local NHS outlet, and they will patch you up for free.

You will then be raring to go again and join the other bone-idle owners of the wonderful geri-cart on the fast-track to oblivion. Mind how you go now.

MRS VICKY STARKEY, Roper Way, Woodsetton

Tell us PM how are we all in this together?

HOW many times have we got to listen to the garbage Cameron keeps saying "we are in it together"?

Most of us are in it up to our necks, but does he or his cronies care? Nearly every day we hear what can we cut, and how much by.

How much more can we tax the ordinary working man without them noticing. How many more pensioners can we let die so that we can cut the pensions.

Has he or any MP noticed - we are not in it together? I have not seen any of the MPs' monies cut, or any of them thrown out of a job. The same goes for local government. What services can we cut or how much can we put the rates up by so that we can keep ourselves in a job plus our normal daily job? Yes we are all in it together, but some are sinking faster.

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NEWS

Meeting will home in on controversial library plan

Karate kids kick up cash



Brandon Botfield and his father Damien Billingsley helped raise cash

KARATE kids took part in a competition to raise money for a Stourbridge charity.

More than 200 martial artists aged between five and 15 took part in the contest at King Charles I school, Kidderminster. They raised around £3,000 for the charity Sunfield, which works with young autistic people and was chosen by the

members of Young Gloves Karate, which has classes at schools in Kidderminster, Stourport, Stourbridge and Bewdley.

Head instructor Justin Thomas said: "Every student that took part can be very proud of themselves, as not only have they supported a very good cause, but also had a lot of fun and gathered experience."

UNDER-fire plans to move Kidderminster Library's gallery and piano in order to make way for offices will go before county councillors this week.

A planning application has been lodged by Worcestershire County Council as part of its decision to convert the second-floor gallery into offices for 130 workers.

The proposals have sparked objections from town residents as well as art and music groups.

The Friends of Kidderminster Library Gallery group has been campaigning against the changes and has been holding a festival to showcase the gallery and raise awareness.

Dozens of people attended the final event in the series, which included a performance from the Birmingham-based Banner Theatre group recently.

The plans were due to go before the county council's planning committee on Tuesday. Stephen Brown, secretary for the Friends group, has registered to speak against the scheme.

He said he would be arguing that the council's proposals to provide space for artwork to be displayed on the first floor and move the Steinway piano to the Corn Exchange or Kidderminster Town Hall are not acceptable alternatives.

He said: "The original gallery was a purpose-built, acoustically-treated, humidity-controlled environment built at considerable cost to the taxpayer. It includes arts and music and performance capabilities. That cannot and should not be compared to a space to hang pictures."

Car worth £24,000 stolen

A CAR worth £24,000 was stolen from the owner's home in Kidderminster.

The raid happened in Heathfield Crescent, when £60, £300 of US dollars and two Cannon cameras were stolen.

The burglars took the blue Ford S-Max, with registration VE10 NHG.

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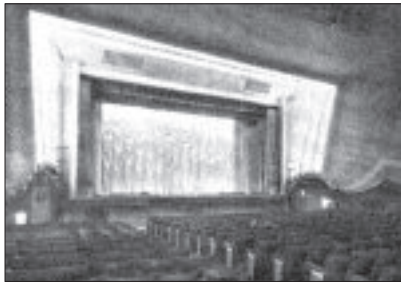
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George Formby meets Walsall Mayor Dr E P Drabble



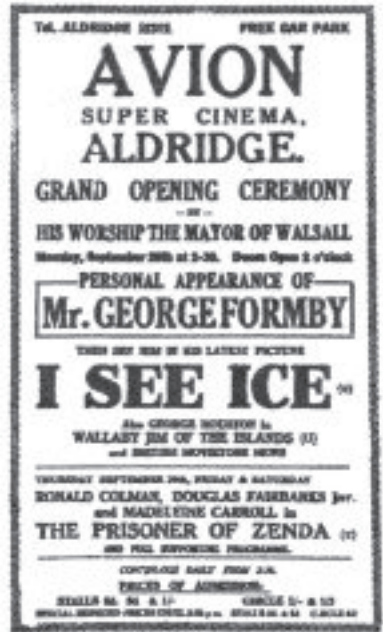
The magnificent proscenium stage at The Avion



Avion staff pictured sometime in the 1950s



The Avion's luxurious foyer circa 1938



An advert for the opening of the new cinema

Avion cinema book is last work of historian

by Tom Mason

A BOOK based upon the scrapbooks of a cinema manager was launched last week by friends of an Aldridge author, who dedicated the last years of his life to its research.

The Avion, by the late author and historian Harry Dennant, tells the stories behind the village's cinema. The grand picture palace was focal point of the community during its heyday during the golden age of Hollywood and also saw live performances from top entertainers, such as George Formby.

The book was largely derived from the scrapbooks of the general manager Harry Russell, who worked there for 20 years, as well as from firsthand accounts of patrons and former staff recorded by Mr Dennant since 2007.

The Avion Cinema De Luxe was built by businessman Albert Brain and opened in September 26, 1938, to bring a touch of Hollywood glamor to Aldridge.

As well as being a cinema showing American and British movies, The Avion also put on shows and in its later years, like so many cinemas, became a bingo hall.

It hosted George Formby for its grand opening before the war but the premises also saw many other stars after it introduced variety acts in 1950.

Comedian

These included comedian Larry Grayson, famous for hosting The Generation Game and his 'Shut That Door' catchphrase, pianist Semprini and Irish crooner Val Doonican with his group The Ramblers.

Aldridge jockey Johnny Bullock, winner of the 1951 Grand National on 40-1 outsider Nickel Coin, was guest of honour at The Avion to watch a newsreel of his famous victory.

In 1973 an Aldridge man, Harry Whitehouse, purchased the building and converted it into the popular

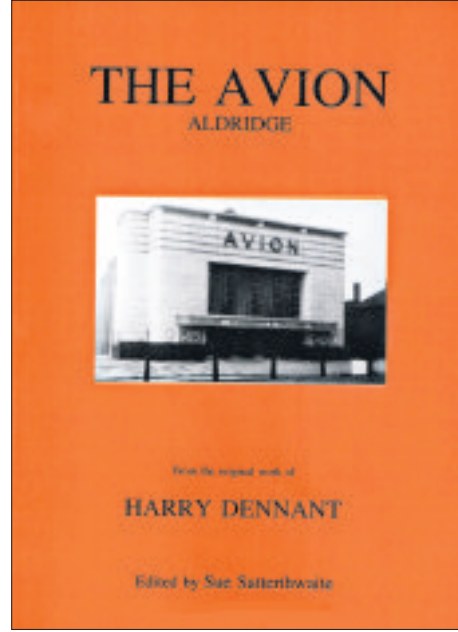
Legalite Bingo Hall, and it remained in his family until his death in 1993 at the age of 83. It was taken over by Jarglen and later Gala Bingo before being abandoned in 2009.

The building was partially demolished but its shell is to be turned into a J.D Wetherspoons pub under plans approved by Walsall Council.

In her foreword, the book's editor Sue Satterthwaite said: "There could be no one better than Harry Dennant to write a book about The Avion. Harry loved the place but sadly he died before his work could be completed."

Proceeds from sales of the book, priced £5m will go to two local charities - Rosie's Helping Hands, a charity which Harry supported, and St Giles Walsall Hospice where the author spent the final days of his life.

The book is available from several local outlets. These include Aldridge Library, in Rookery Lane, Aldridge; Scrumptious Sweets and Treats, Anchor Parade, Aldridge; Lynda's Pets and Plants Walsall Wood Road, Aldridge; and Waterstones, in Park Street, Walsall.

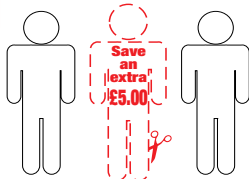


Harry Dennant's book on the village's movie palace

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NEWS

Superhead spared a ban by disciplinary tribunal

A SUPERHEAD and her two teaching colleagues found guilty of unacceptable professional conduct after altering attendance records at a Dudley school will not be banned from the classroom.

Dame Mo Brennan was honoured by the Queen for turning round the fortunes of Hillcrest School and Community College, in Netherton, alongside senior teachers Shelley Derham and Linda Westwood.

But a disciplinary tribunal ruled they had acted dishonestly when they changed pupil attendance records.

Despite the "serious" nature of their behaviour, The Teaching Agency disciplinary panel ruled a teaching ban was not necessary.

And it has been revealed that this recommendation had been agreed by education secretary Michael Gove. No further action will be taken.

Significant

Teaching Agency deputy director Alan Meyrick said in the report: "The panel is conscious this public hearing has resulted in a finding of unacceptable professional conduct."

"This is a significant finding and, in the panel's view, satisfies the need to publicly declare and uphold proper standards of conduct."

"However, it is not necessary, in the public interest, to impose a prohibition order."

The panel said it was satisfied the actions of the trio "were motivated by both a desire to act in the best interests of pupils."

Mr Meyrick added: "We would go further and say that, in the light of the exceptional achievements of Dame Maureen Brennan, there is a public interest in her being able to continue her inspirational leadership as a headteacher."

The three teachers now work at Barr Beacon School in Aldridge which has given its backing to the three.

Widower raises funding



Gurcharan Singh Bedi, left, and his 18-month-old grand-daughter Sonu Bedi with Cancer Support Dudley manager Chris Barron, Councillor Kurshid Ahmed and Dudley Council housing director Andrea Pope-Smith

MORE than £1,000 has been raised for a charity in Dudley in memory of a woman who lost her fight with cancer. The charity, based at the White House, will receive £1,058 thanks to his efforts. White House centre manager Chris Barron said the charity welcomed Mr Bedi's continued support. "His efforts are a great help in raising much-needed funds."

His wife, Surjeet Kaur Bedi, died

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Landmark pub can be demolished, says council

THE owner of a Dudley pub, which is on a main route through the Black Country, has secured consent to demolish it, despite calls for it to be preserved.

Amrinder Singh can now knock down the King Arthur on the corner of Priory Road and Birmingham New Road. The demolition plans had sparked calls for the building, a 1930s roadhouse, to be preserved.

Mr Singh had informed Dudley Council of his plans, and under planning rules the authority had 28 days to object.

Ward councillor Alan Finch said he was disappointed the council had been "powerless" to stop the building from being knocked down.

Two years ago, the pub, which is locally listed, had been earmarked for a £3.5million

revamp. It would have been extended to create a hotel, and planning permission for the scheme was granted in May 2010.

It is not yet known what will happen to the site. Mr Singh could not be contacted for a comment but his agent Neil Denison said he did not know what was planned.

Camra and The 20th Century Society objected to demolition.

Nearby resident Alison Whitehouse, said: "It is very sad that yet another part of our local heritage is to disappear and there is nothing that we can do about it."

Deputy leader of Dudley Council Shaikat Ali said: "Legally the authority can only consider the way the building is demolished and the proposed restoration after the site has been cleared."

Two are guilty of killing

TWO friends have been found guilty of manslaughter for attacking a man from Dudley with a baseball bat and a wooden pole.

Ismaeel Rehman died of his injuries after being hit on the head. Mr Rehman, of Surrey Road, Holly Hall, Dudley, had gone to drug dealer Jason Noto's flat in Telford with the intention of either buying or robbing cannabis from him, a jury at Birmingham Crown Court had been told.

Mr Rehman had turned up with, his friend Robert Jones, known as Tyson. Noto grabbed a baseball bat from inside the flat and attacked the trainee carpenter. Eyewitnesses told the jury

he was dragged up and ordered to 'get on his knees and pray' by Noto before being smashed over the head and knocked unconscious with the bat by factory worker Jones.

The pair continued to beat Mr Rehman, who was 22 at the time of the attack in July 2009, before he managed to stagger away.

He was found lying nearby and rushed to hospital with a fractured skull, bleeding on the brain, a fractured cheekbone and bruising all over his body. Neurosurgeon Rupert Price had earlier told the jury Mr Rehman would have died within days if he had not been operated on.

He was in recovery after spending months in rehabilitation centres but died on New Year's Day 2011, aged 24,

after suffering a massive epileptic seizure. Prosecuting counsel Mr Andrew O'Byrne said it was clear Mr Rehman had developed epilepsy as a result of the assault and there was a 'direct causal link' between the attack and his death nearly 18 months later. Noto, 24, of Powis Place, Dawley Bank, Telford, and Jones, also 24, of Webb Crescent, Dawley, Telford, had both denied murder. A jury returned verdicts of manslaughter against both men after more than 10 hours of deliberations yesterday.

Speaking after the verdict, Mr Rehman's mother Khursheed said: "Our lives will never be the same, he never will have the opportunity to have children, or us grandparents to his children."

Report call on potholes

Recent heavy rainfall and plummeting temperatures may create potholes - and Worcestershire County Council wants people to report them quickly.

It spent £60 million in three years to improve roads, including finding and fixing about 33,000 problems caused in winter.

Councillor John Smith, said: "If you spot a problem, let us know - the sooner we know about it, the sooner we can come out and have it fixed." People can report potholes at www.worcestershire.gov.uk/myselfservice/pothole.aspx

School celebrates glowing inspection



Headteacher Ruth Wylie, with pupils Kian Smith, eight and Emily Parkes, seven, with, top, Opal Whyte, seven, Layla Henry, eight, and Jack Bradley, seven

STAFF and pupils at a primary school in Dudley are celebrating after it was rated "good with outstanding features" in an Ofsted inspection.

Wren's Nest Primary School was praised for helping children fulfil their potential.

In a report, inspectors said: "Teaching is good and the help given to pupils with additional needs is outstanding."

They went on to highlight the way in which the school involves parents and carers and how the school's curriculum provides rich and memorable experiences for the pupils. Inspectors also reported how "children behave exceptionally well, feel safe and are very proud of their school".

The school recently underwent a two-year transformation with a £6 million new build taking place.

Headteacher Ruth Wylie said she was "proud" of the school's achievement.

"The parents, pupils and staff have all worked tirelessly."

Trust opening Rock Houses for Christmas

THE National Trust is opening the Kinver Edge Rock Houses for a Christmas event on December 15.

The houses and tea rooms will be decorated with traditional trimmings being made and put up by Year 6 children at Brindley Heath Junior School.

Visitors will be able to tuck into mince pies, roasted chestnuts and hot chocolate.

Laura Broadhurst, community engagement officer at the National Trust, said: "It's really exciting to be able to bring the houses to life for Christmas, we've been overwhelmed by local support for the event and I'm really looking forward to it."

"I think it will definitely get people into the Christmas spirit." There will be a Christmas Trail that takes children on a hunt for Father Christmas. The event will run from 10am to 3pm.

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- New Year's Eve 'Let's Dance' - admission £6.50

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COMPETITION

Chance to snap up free camera

BE sure to capture those special Christmas memories for a lifetime with this competition as Asda Great Bridge, celebrates its new-look store.

The company has teamed up with the Chronicle series to offer readers the chance to win one of three Nikon Coolpix compact digital cameras from the Brickhouse Lane store.

For details on how to enter the competition see below right.

Customers can expect to find a wide range of products and services in the store's new technology department including a brand new phone shop, photo desk with printing services, a selection of the newest digital cameras, a selection of flat screen TVs plus music, DVDs and computer games for all the family.

Having served the community for more than 15 years, Asda Great Bridge's recent remodel has transformed the store providing customers with a brand new shopping experience and increased product ranges.

Simi Chaudhry, general store manager at Asda Great Bridge, said: "We hope our customers are as excited by the new offering as we are. We have improved the shopping experience for our customers and are providing more choice.

"We hope we can help three lucky readers capture some wonderful Christmas memories."

Simi Chaudhry, general store manager at the revamped Asda Great Bridge



The Nikon Coolpix compact digital cameras up for grabs



ASDA

HOW TO ENTER

To be in with a chance of winning, answer this:

What is the address on the newly-revamped store?

Send your answer on a postcard with your name, address and contact number to Camera Competition, Chronicle series (editorial), 51-53 Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES.

Closing date: Thursday December 20.

Usual rules apply. Editor's decision is final.

star★extraTRAVEL London Theatre Breaks

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FROM £139.95 (Dine and Dance)

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Self-drive breaks

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FROM £109.95 (Saturday Night)

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* The "from" price and price bands vary for each show – see brochure for details. Single room supplements apply.

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or go to expressandstar.com/starextratravel

Please read brochure/web page for full information plus terms and conditions



Car stolen from drive

A CAR was stolen when the owner left it running on his drive while he popped into his home.

West Mercia Police are now reminding people not to leave their cars unattended with engines running after the theft, which happened in Beeches Road, Kidderminster.

The owner left his maroon Citroen Xsara - registration S446 EGT - on the drive while he went inside the house when a man drove it away. Anyone with information can call on 101, quoting incident reference 64-S-031212, or Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111.

Chief's service pledge

DUDLEY'S new fire chief has vowed the fire service could continue to keep people safe, despite the cuts they face.

Station commander Lee Baker takes over at a tough time for the West Midlands Fire Service, with jobs expected to be cut from 1,500 to 1,250 and savings of £30 million to be made by 2014.

He said: "We're going to have some hard times ahead delivering the level of service expected while reducing our numbers and the number of fire appliances available."

"But we will strive to continue to provide the level of professionalism and service that we always have."

Mr Baker, aged 42, was born and raised in West Bromwich and has worked in fire stations across the West Midlands. This is his

second stint in Dudley and he and his young family live in Stourbridge.

The father of two boys said: "The changes will result in a smaller service but through technology and innovation we hope to come out stronger."

Mr Baker said he had always wanted to be a firefighter but, when recruitment for the service was frozen as he finished school, he went to work in a factory instead.

He said: "That was always meant to be a stop-gap until I could get into the fire service. I wanted to be a fireman because it was a chance to get into a profession that was well-respected and gave me the opportunity to help the community." Meanwhile, the service has just begun a consultation process looking into its future. This ends on January 4 and more information is at www.wmfs.net/content/consultation.



New Dudley fire station commander Lee Baker

Hospital chief defends record following report

THE medical director of Dudley's hospital trust defended it against a report claiming it recorded a high number of deaths for the past three years - saying there was actually "a significant improvement".

Paul Harrison spoke after the Dr Foster Hospital Guide named Dudley Group NHS Foundation Trust as one of three to have had consistently high mortality rates for three years running. Mr Harrison said independent analysis actually showed death levels were getting better.

"We take mortality indicators very seriously and this is one of a number of tools we use to assure ourselves of the quality of our care."

"Current independent analyses show that the Trust is not an outlier for mortality."

Indeed, recent reports suggest a significant and sustained improvement.

"The most recent data from Dr Foster shows the Trust mortality figure as 100 which is well within the expected range," he said.

"Similarly, the Department of Health's own measure of mortality - the SHMI Index - which is more up to date than the published figure from Dr Foster shows a significant improvement over the last year and no excess deaths at Dudley Group."

"We continue to undertake work to improve the quality of our clinical care and, in addition, have invested in improving our collection of data which is used by Dr Foster and other third parties to calculate NHS mortality scores."

Choirs raise voices at Christmas show



Ellie Kovacs, aged seven, front with others from Jesson's Church of England Primary School Jubilate Gospel Choir and some of The Gentlemen Songsters Male Voice Choir

A PRIMARY school choir and a male voice will celebrate Christmas together.

Jesson's Church of England Primary School's Jubilate Choir, Dudley, will join The Gentleman's Songsters for the Dudley Town Hall concert this Saturday, December 15.

Musical director David Jackson said: "We sing pop music as well as hymns and religious music. At Saturday's concert we'll be singing a range, including a nice adaptation we have of Sweet Child O' Mine."

The Jubilate choir has about 30 members, aged between seven and 11, and is one of three choirs at the school, which specialises in the performing arts.

Mr Jackson said: "We find music and performing arts help the children learn." The concert starts at 7.30pm. The school's three choirs will also be presenting a concert called That's What I Call Christmas on December 20 at 7pm at the town hall.

Arsonists set fire to a £250,000 crane

ARSONISTS set fire to a £250,000 crane at a metal recycling firm in Dudley.

Enablink Ltd, in Wallbrook, near Coseley, was targeted just by the vandals.

The culprits set fire to the 30-ton crane used for lifting metal and putting it into a machine at the site, off Budden Road.

A security guard was alerted to what was happening after hearing a noise and called emergency services.

Two fire engines from Tipton and Bilston attended and took 30 minutes to get the fire under control.

An investigation has been launched and CCTV of the site has been studied in a bid to find those responsible.

Tipton firefighter Paul Sears said: "The security guard on the site heard something and when he looked he could see someone running off."

"They have CCTV and have told police," he added.



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NEWS

Talks on scheme for reopening railway line

REGIONAL transport bosses confirmed talks have been held with a firm looking to reopen an existing rail freight line for passenger services through Dudley.

But they say the plans are just one option. Others include extending the Midland Metro to Dudley and Brierley Hill.

Parry People Movers, Cradley Heath, had drawn up initial £5 million proposals to open a tram-train service on a line from Stourbridge to Brierley Hill.

They outlined plans to use the freight line from Stourbridge Junction to the former Round Oak station, Brierley Hill, with three metro-style stations.

Bosses at West Midlands Transport authority Centro say they have held talks with the engineering firm and are considering it against other options available.

How dispute over ice cream turf erupted into violence

AN ice cream war erupted in Dudley when a seller attacked a rival's van for cashing in on "his turf".

Steffan Debatista is now behind bars for his outburst against rival Maxine Catalano. He taunted her for eight miles after spotting her van on his patch. She managed to get away from him but when her van ended up behind his at traffic lights in Birmingham Road, he deliberately reversed into her.

Prosecutor Marisha Parathalingham told Wolverhampton Crown Court last week that Debatista sped off but the 20-year-old was traced because a witness noted his registration.

Debatista, of Boundary Hill, Lower Gornal, struck again 11 days later on September 15 last year while on bail for the first offence. This time he snapped off the handle of the machine in Miss Catalano's van, flooding it with ice cream, the court heard.

Debatista was jailed for five months for dangerous driving and one month for criminal damage, to run concurrently, as well as being banned from driving for two years.

He admitted the criminal damage charge. After the hearing, Maxine Catalano told



Steffan Debatista



Maxine Catalano and niece Chloe Smith

what had happened. The 49-year-old mother of three who lives in the Oldbury area, had taken a job driving for Steve's Super Whip, of Cox's Lane, Cradley Heath.

On September 4, as she drove along Dibdale Road, Gornal, at about 1.40pm, she saw Debatista behind her. She said: "He was trying to cut in front of me."

"When we passed the Fellows Club, next to Dudley Zoo, he was still with us and, when we stopped at the traffic lights outside the

old JB's nightclub he parked adjacent."

She said he leaned out of his window and threatened to smash her van. Miss Catalano continued to try to dodge him but then, near the Tesco at Burnt Tree, she realised he was directly in front.

"I pulled up behind his van, which was now stopped at lights. I saw him suddenly start reversing his van directly at me and he collided, causing about £1,500 damage to the front of my van."

Miss Catalano says she and her 13-year-old niece who was with her, received back and neck injuries. But then, while Debatista was on bail for damaging her vehicle, he turned up as she was selling ice cream on the corner of Tudor Road and Glen Road, Upper Gornal. He told her she should not be serving at that time and he wanted the phone number of her boss.

When she refused, he grabbed the lever of the ice cream machine, breaking it off and causing £600 damage.

Miss Catalano said she only sold ice cream occasionally because she was frightened, but now he was behind bars she would be back out on her rounds.

Relatives and neighbours of Debatista paint a much sweeter picture of him, even saying they were launching a petition to free him. His mother, 44-year-old Michelle Debatista, and his 17-year-old girlfriend Tammy Jones are distraught.

Mrs Debatista said: "The sentence is so unfair and harsh - nobody was hurt and I don't believe he did what was claimed in court."

Man hunt for man after raid at store



The man police want to find

POLICE want to speak to a man in connection with a robbery at a store in Brierley Hill.

A thug used a knife to terrorise a woman assistant at the One-Stop shop in Turners Lane, Withymoor, and he fled with the takings.

It happened on November 17 at 9pm.

The man police want to speak to was pictured on CCTV wearing a distinctive tracksuit top and anyone with information is asked to call DC Ryan Matthews, of West Midlands CID, on 101.

Alternatively people can call Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

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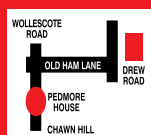
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CHRISTMAS

Hilda and Harry's house lets it glow for a festive spectacle



Hilda and Harry Creaney's house in Willenhall is like a real life grotto after they went all out decorating it with trees, lights and decorations



A family of Santas are among the decorations inside the house in Walsall Street



Tracy, Hilda, Harry, and Dawn are pictured outside their super festive house



George Hall, of Swallowfields Road, Sedgley, with grandchildren Myles and Cameron Davies



Neil Robbins outside his home in Douglas Road, Smethwick, which has a giant polar bear in the garden

IT has been a festive attraction in the Black Country for years and with hundreds of Santas, snowmen, baubles and tinsel there is no doubting Hilda Creaney's semi-detached house is well and truly ready for Christmas 2012.

More than 1,000 decorations adorn the hallway and living room of the house in Walsall Street, Willenhall, which Hilda shares with her husband Harry. And outside the front door, along with the bright decorations which include Santas, reindeer and stars, stands a postbox which each year gets around 300 letters for Santa from children, all of which receive a reply.

Inside the house Santas, snowmen, penguins, angels and elves are arranged on the ceiling, walls and every flat surface, costing from 50p to £400.

The retired social work assistant said she loves this time of year: "I love Christmas and I love to see the children's faces when they see what we've done here. The local nursery school come up to see the house and I always show them the crib in the hall and tell them that is what Christmas is really about."

Her preparations for the Christmas season start in the middle of November when the boxes of baubles, tinsel and other decorations are brought out of storage at a nephew's factory. Putting the lights on the front of the house is another big job which is carried out by Hilda's grandson Jamie and friends.

The interior of the family's cosy home is transformed into a Christmas grotto with the big switch-on taking place on the last Saturday in November when about 25 friends and family travel from Wales, Telford and Birmingham for the occasion. The tradition, which started nearly

40 years ago, was inspired by a Yuletide-themed picture which her three children coloured in. Carl, now 49 and a Walsall councillor, Tracey, 47, and Dawn, 37, and their friends worked for days on the artwork. Dad Harry was so impressed he mounted the picture in a glass-fronted box with a strip light and displayed it in the bay window.

Hilda says: "People ask whether I get depressed when it all has to come down and it's true that I do. But on the other hand, it's a chance to give the house a proper clean and that makes me feel good, too."

The Creaneys are one of a number of householders around the region who have been getting into the Christmas spirit with inflatable snowmen, illuminated Santas and reindeer on hand to help residents create the perfect Christmas display.

Covered

Grandfather-of-seven George Hall transformed his Sedgley home into a winter wonderland with an inflatable Snowman in the garden. The display, which takes more than a week to put up, also has a flashing candle, Christmas trees and Santas on the roof.

Cascading icicle lights hanging from the roof complete the lights display which has been collected over the years.

The 66-year-old, of Swallowfields Road, said: "I'm still a big kid at heart and Christmas is a magical time of the year."

Wendy and Chris Fletcher have covered the front of their home on Stafford Road, Wolverhampton, with an array of lights and other decorations including a giant snow dome.

It took them from 9.30 in the morning until 8 at night to get everything out and up but say it was well worth the effort.

Mrs Fletcher, a mother-of-five said: "This year

we decided to add some extra lights as we thought we wanted to brighten things up a bit and we have already decided to do even more next year when we plan to have a light show. Usually we take all the children out to have a look at other people's houses but this year it is nice that a few people have stopped to look at ours."

Another house where the lights are shining brightly belongs to Neil Robbins home in Douglas Road, Smethwick.

He has a giant bear as well as a reindeer and train which both light up in the garden with many more decorations on the front and the side of the house itself.

A father from Oldbury has dressed his house for Christmas with 17 different sets of lights, a polar bear and a Christmas train.

Neil Robbins, has spent the last two weeks making his home on Douglas Road the talk of the town, by covering it in lights and decorations for Christmas.

He started decorating his house this way around eight years ago when his three children were small. The decorations include reindeer, a polar bear, snowmen and a train.

The 30-year-old said: "I am just a big kid at heart and absolutely love it. Nobody else round here really decorates their homes, but I just love the reaction I get from passersby. The other day a family came and sat outside the house in their car for around half an hour, just to look at the lights."

The mini bus driver also likes to decorate his bus during the festive period.

He said: "I do some driving for The Orchard School, and the children just love to see the bus all Christmassy, it really makes people smile."



Wendy Fletcher with Daniel, Chris, Ben, Nathan and Jamie Fletcher in Wolverhampton

Inside: your best of Yuletide television and a page of puzzles

CHRISTMAS

Wildlife takes on an entirely new dimension



David Attenborough goes 3D on Sky

SIR David Attenborough's new 3D series on the Galapagos Islands has been confirmed as part of Sky's Christmas and New Year schedules.

The multi-award-winning natural history broadcaster's fourth collaboration with Sky will use pioneering 3D techniques and technology to explore the unique environments and species of the Galapagos in a three part series.

"It's only now that the latest developments in camera technology have given us the possibility of filming the full range of wildlife in 3D, and the first place I wanted to put that to the test was the Galapagos," said Attenborough.

"I mean, lizards that swim, swim down to the bottom of the seabed and graze seaweed, has to be really an extraordinary thing."

Other treats on Sky over the festive season include Daniel Radcliffe and Mad Men's Jon Hamm's critically acclaimed A Young Doctor's Notebook, which will air on Sky Arts, and a new series of Little Crackers comedy shorts, with Darren Boyd, Rebecca Front and Joanna Lumley among the comics signed up.

There will be Christmas specials for Sky1 and Sky Living sitcoms including Spy, Trolled and Mount Pleasant, while Sky Atlantic will air HBO's Emmy-nominated drama Hemingway & Gellhorn, which has been a huge hit on the opposite side of the Atlantic.

The Sky Movies Christmas Channel is also back in business, with The Muppets and The Adventures of Tintin: The Secret of the Unicorn among the new



The unusual suspects . . . Bad Santas

films on show.

Bad Santas is a two-part documentary following a group of unemployed men with difficult pasts as they try to make a fresh start, at Santa School.

The Channel Four show follows a group of unemployed men in their 50's as they are taken through their paces at the UK's most successful Santa School - but only the best will make it into the grottos in time for Christmas.

In true Christmas spirit, James Lovell, Managing Director of Ministry of Fun, is offering a unique opportunity to this carefully selected group of men, each who have had a difficult past and are looking to make a fresh start.

James wants to give them the chance to regain their confidence and find employment.

Whilst working with the MOF, the men must attend Santa School and pass a number of challenges from learning how to wear a Santa costume with confidence, how to perfect the art of a jolly 'ho ho ho', learn the most popular toys for Christmas and most importantly, how to deal with those tricky questions from children.



Joseph Morgan plays Ben Hur in the new drama

A TV miniseries version of sword-and-sandals classic Ben Hur is a cornerstone of Channel Five's festive programme.

This take on Lewis Wallace's 1880 novel is a Canadian/German co-production shot in Morocco, but littered with familiar faces.

Marc Warren is a surly zealot, Ben Cross plays an emperor, and there are cameos from Ray Winstone and Hugh Bonneville. Joseph Morgan plays Judah Ben Hur while Stephen Campbell Moore smoulders as his Roman nemesis Messala.



Doctor Who hooks up with his new assistant Jenna-Louise Coleman, in the Christmas Day special



Miranda Hart returns for two festive specials, and Gary Barlow is among the men in her firing line



Fabrice Muamba, Bobby Ball, Katy Brand and Jonathan 'JB' Gill are among the Strictly stars

A festive feast

CHRISTMAS Day looks set to be the battle of the period dramas, as ITV and BBC both unleash festive one-off episodes of their biggest hitters, Downton Abbey and Call The Midwife.

One-off specials have become very much the flavour of the Christmas season in recent years, and 2012 is no exception.

Doctor Who unveils his new assistant, Strictly Come Dancing returns with a mix of fascinating newbies and former champions, and the Royle Family's 2011 episode - which never made it onto our screens - finally arrives 12 months late.

And fans of enchanting animation The Snowman will be walking in the air when they hear the news that a new version of the much loved tale is on its way, to mark the 30th anniversary of the original.

Here's a dozen good reasons why you won't want to stray too far from the TV set over the Christmas season:

DOCTOR WHO (BBC1) This year's time-travelling special, called The Snowmen, officially introduces Jenna-Louise Coleman as The Doctor's new companion Clara.

It also features Richard E Grant as the villainous Doctor Simeon and familiar characters Vastra, Strax and Jenny, who are there to support The Doctor.

Writer and executive producer Steven Moffat teased details of the new episode in a chat for the BBC Doctor Who blog.

He said: "The Doctor at Christmas is one of my favourite things - but this year it's different. He's lost Amy and Rory to the Weeping Angels, and he's not in a good place: in fact, he's Scrooge."

"He's withdrawn from the world and no longer cares what happens to it. So when all of humanity hangs in the balance, can anyone persuade a tired and heartbroken Doctor that it's time to return to the good fight? Enter Jenna-Louise Coleman..."

Doctor Who star Matt Smith added: "For this year's Christmas Special we have the wonderfully villainous Richard E Grant as Doctor Simeon. As well as lizards, Victorian assassins and deranged warriors from the future all return to convince The Doctor that he should board the Tardis again and save the world."

"Add to that Jenna-Louise Coleman and so begins the Christmas Special 2012. It does the sort of wonderful Doctor Who-ey Christmas things - you know, snow, aliens, good will, good cheer, someone trying to take over the world..."

DOWNTON ABBEY (ITV1) The Crawleys go off on their holidays in the two-hour Downton Abbey special, leaving the servants to fend for themselves.

Lord Grantham and his family are heading north to the Scottish Highlands to join the Dowager Countess's great niece Lady Rose and her parents at Dunrobin Castle.

The headstrong Lady Rose (Lily James) was sent home in the last episode of series three after a dalliance with a married man.

Initially, a warm welcome awaits, but the tensions between the family and their hosts soon become clear.

We're promised "salacious scandals, clandestine courtships and heartbreaks of seasons past" will all come to a head during the feature-length episode.

And while it may well snow (it is Scotland, after all) don't expect Christmas decorations or another stilted present-giving as the seasonal special is, in fact, set in September.

But what of those left back at Downton? Will Lord Grantham return to find they've had a massive party and trashed the place with late-night parties and raves?

Stoic head butler Carson is of course determined to prevent this, but with the excitement of the approaching country fair, it's possible some of the staff could be tempted to push their luck.

Speaking of luck, it seems romance could be in the air for chirpy cook Mrs Patmore, while personal servant O'Brien finds a kindred spirit below stairs in the form of Susan's lady's maid Wilkins.

CALL THE MIDWIFE (BBC1) The Beeb has produced a



75-minute episode of its hit 1950s drama which those who have seen a sneak preview say serves up festive cheer in spades.

It's 1957, Poplar's cobbled streets have a dusting of snow and Nonnatus House is busier than ever.

Chummy (Miranda Hart) is now married, but her husband PC Noakes hardly gets a look in as she begins choreographing a Nativity play for the local cub scouts that soon snowballs into an epic.

Nurse Jenny (Jessica Raine), meanwhile, finds herself being stalked to each and every birth by a batty old crone called Mrs Jenkins - well known on the local birthing scene but generally dismissed as a bit of a nutcase.

But with Christmas being the season of goodwill, Nurse Jenny finds it in her heart to offer help rather than hindrance, and it is her investigation into Mrs Jenkins and her past that forms the backbone of the episode's plot.

Daily Telegraph reviewer Benji Wilson says: "If all of that sounds a little mawkish, it comes, as did the first series of Call the Midwife, with just enough social realism to sugar the pill - or more accurately pill the sugar. In amongst the warm-hearted gurning, Call the Midwife is not afraid to address the bigger issues like abortion, social housing, the resplendent wonder of the NHS, or the merits or otherwise of close communities."

THE SNOWMAN AND THE SNOWDOG (CH4) The centrepiece of Channel Four's Christmas season is the long-awaited return of The Snowman in a brand new sequel to the much-loved original, which first screened 30 years ago.

Adapted for the screen from Raymond Briggs' book in

1982, the Oscar-nominated film - wordless, apart from its evocative theme, Walking in the Air - has been screened by Channel 4 every year since it was first transmitted and has enchanted generations of children.

On the 30th anniversary of the original film, Briggs has given his blessing to a brand-new sequel and the magic is about to begin all over again, this time with a new set of friends.

When a young boy and his mother move house, the boy discovers a secret box hidden under the floorboards of his bedroom. In the box, he finds a hat, scarf, some lumps of coal and a shrivelled tangerine - it's a snowman-making kit! Later that day it starts to snow and the boy builds a Snowman and, with the little spare snow leftover, a Snowdog. That night, at the stroke of midnight, the Snowman and Snowdog magically come to life.

The boy awakes and joins them on an amazing adventure, flying over London and onwards to the North Pole, where Snowmen and Snowwomen from around the world are gathering for 'The Annual Downhill Race'.

Competing with an assortment of colourful characters, the boy and the Snowdog narrowly win the race and are rewarded with a prize from Father Christmas. Dawn is breaking so the boy stuffs the present unopened into his pocket for the journey back. When he arrives home, the boy must leave his new friends outside and return to bed - but first, a wonderful surprise awaits him . . .

THE GIRL (BBC2) Sienna Miller may not be most famous for being Jude Law's on-off girlfriend for much longer. The British model-turned-actress takes centre

CHRISTMAS



Gordon Ramsay will be doing his live Christmas Day cookalong again, with some familiar faced guests



Sienna Miller as Tippi Hedren in *The Girl*, based on the woman who was Alfred Hitchcock's obsession



The Snowman and the Snowdog, a new version of the enchanting tale to mark its special anniversary

So much for the season of goodwill

THERE'S one thing you can guarantee this Christmas...in true roast turkey fashion, some of our most popular soap stars are about to find themselves well and truly stuffed!

In the world of continuing drama, no-one seems to tell the writers that it is supposed to be the season of goodwill. Death, violence, betrayal, financial and romantic heartache are all being served up with the usual festive trimmings in *Coronation Street*, *EastEnders* and *Emmerdale*. Here's a snapshot of what's in store over the coming weeks:



What's it all about, Alfie? He's about to find out

EASTENDERS

Something's got Alfie Moon looking glum . . . and we can all guess what it is. Details of wife Kat's secret affair, and her web of lies and betrayal, begin to unravel. Alfie's world is torn apart as the truth unfolds. But could he find happiness by finally getting together with Roxy (Rita Symons). Meanwhile, with her feelings bottled up for too long, Lauren goes back to her old ways. Out of control, she lets out a huge secret which has major consequences. It's been widely reported that the death of Derek Branning will be one of the big *EastEnders* Christmas storylines, but bosses are keeping the details about his death tightly under wraps. What is known, though, is that Dot Cotton is set to return in time for this year's explosive episode, having filmed scenes with grand-daughter Abi.



Leanne has one too many on her hen night

CORONATION STREET

Is a Christmas wedding on the cards in Weatherfield? You bet it is - but who is tying the knot?

Publicity manager Alison Sinclair tweeted a teaser picture showing the hem of a white embroidered dress, and one scarlet shoe. "A touch of the Wizard of Oz comes to Corrie," she said.

There are several candidates; Leanne and Nick, Carla and Peter, Kirsty and Tyrone . . . even Julie and Brian (those Judy Garland-style ruby slippers would be right up her retro fashion street). Leanne struggles with her feelings as she gets ready to tie the knot with Nick, and her wicked half sister Eva plots to split them up.

It's set to be an interesting Christmas for mixed-up lovers Marcus and Maria too, when they are paid a visit by his parents Ron and Janet Dent.



Cameron panics, and heads into the woods

EMMERDALE

Emmerdale is set to kill off another character this Christmas as murderer Cameron Murray strikes again, adding another guilty secret to his conscience.

Cameron killed Carl King but remains a free man as his on-off lover Chas Dingle (Lucy Pargeter) is awaiting trial for murder, wrongly believing she delivered the fatal blow. He confesses his guilt to one of the village's residents then realises his honesty was a mistake, and takes his confidante captive before later ending their life, waking next morning in blind panic, and heading to the woods hoping to bury the evidence.

So who's Cameron's victim? Jimmy King, who is planning to bankroll Chas' defence? Other names in the frame from fans are Gennie Walker, Lisa Dingle, or even Cameron's former girlfriend Debbie Dingle.

of telly treats



The BBC is bringing back its popular drama, *Call the Midwife*, for a one-off festive special full of cheer



The Crawleys head north in *Downton Abbey's* Christmas special, filmed at Inveraray Castle in Scotland



Patience is a virtue . . . *The Royle Family* Christmas Special is finally on its way after the false start last year



stage in this eerie movie, documenting film maker Alfred Hitchcock's obsession with the leading lady of his cult motion picture *The Birds*, Tippi Hedren.

The trailer, which can be found online, shows Hitchcock, played by *The Hunger Games* actor Toby Jones, and Hedren (Miller) having dinner, as the director refers to his new project as 'my most ambitious movie ever.'

Sienna's character Tippi, who became a Hollywood icon after she was cast as the leading lady in the 1963 thriller, tells him: "I'll make you so proud of me. I'll be putty in your hands."

However, as the action cuts to a toast with two Martini glasses, Hitchcock says: "To Alfred and Tippi", and a look of fear flashes across her face.

The director famously fixated on the actress who became one of his archetypal 'Hitchcock blondes', and Hedren later said it made her life a misery.

STRICTLY COME DANCING CHRISTMAS SPECIAL (BBC1) Miracle footballer Fabrice Muamba is to crown his comeback from the dead by transferring his nifty footwork to the dancefloor.

The former Bolton Wanderers midfielder - who suffered a heart attack during an FA Cup tie last season - is one of six celebrities competing in the one-off Christmas edition.

The line-up is completed by Jonathan 'JB' Gill from boy band JLS, daredevil Blue Peter presenter Helen Skelton, veteran actress Sheila Hancock, comic Bobby Ball and comedienne Katy Brand.

And the Christmas edition will include show dances from an array of contestants who have dazzled viewers in years

gone by, including Kelly Brook, Rachel Stevens, and the show's first ever champion, newsreader Natasha Kaplinsky. Also taking to the dancefloor will be last year's runner up Chelsea Healey, 2009 winner Chris Hollins and track star Colin Jackson.

Muamba revealed he turned down ITV's *Dancing On Ice*, but said: "I'd do *Strictly* Come Dancing. I love my salsa, so I'll be well up for that."

GORDON RAMSAY'S CHRISTMAS COOKALONG - LIVE (CH4) It's Christmas morning. The kids are screaming, grandma's on her third glass of sherry and you've got mountains of uncooked ingredients and no idea what to do with them. You need help. Live from his very own kitchen, Gordon Ramsay will again guide you through Christmas dinner step-by-step, sharing his favourite tips.

If you're being brave, going commando and doing it all at the last minute, Gordon will help get you through it, with viewers invited to get involved through phone calls and tweets. The chef will also be joined by a collection of famous guests who made 2012 go with a bang.

THE ROYLE FAMILY (BBC1) Postponed from last Christmas due to script delays, this year's Yuletide antics see Dave (Craig Cash) planning to pitch an idea to the Dragons' Den tycoons, while Jim (Ricky Tomlinson) is pinning all his hopes of winning big on a Christmas scratch card. Meanwhile, a new neighbour has moved onto the street, and apparently, the fact that she has an "impressive cleavage" doesn't go unnoticed by widower neighbour Joe (Peter Martin) who's on the lookout for romance. He places an advert in the *Lonely Hearts* column, 'Vacant Lady

Wanted'. Who could resist?

MIRANDA (BBC1) Radio Times TV editor Alison Graham says: "It's been a dizzy few years for Miranda Hart. Her cheerfully silly BBC2 sitcom won a big following - so big that Miranda now treads a well established path to glory by moving to BBC1." There are two festive episodes in the can. In one of them, we return to the joke shop where Take That star and X Factor judge Gary Barlow finds himself in the firing line as a potential new love interest for the socially clumsy heroine.

PANTO! (ITV1) Comedian John Bishop stars as a cheeky DJ who makes his stage debut in a local performance of pantomime Dick Whittington. The eclectic cast also includes Sheridan Smith, most recently seen in acclaimed drama *Mrs Biggs*, plus Waterloo Road star Mark Benton, and 1980s chart star Chesney 'I Am The One And Only' Hawkes.

THE UNSEEN FRANKIE HOWARD (CH4) Titter ye not . . . this 90-minute documentary includes never before seen footage of the late comedian, who led a colourful and tortured private life. It speaks to many who were closest to the Up Pompeii star, and who knew him best.

THE JK ROWLING STORY - MAGIC BEYOND WORDS (FIVE) An interesting concept, this . . . a made-for-TV movie looking at JK Rowling's rise to become one of the most influential writers, from her humble beginnings as an imaginative young girl and awkward teenager to the loss of her mother and the genesis of the *Harry Potter* phenomenon.

CHRISTMAS

Festive Puzzles Extra

Word Wise

The following words may sound familiar, but do you know what each means?

1. PECCABLE

- A. Liable to sin
B. Small farming area
C. Smart

2. RESIANT

- A. Pliable
B. Resident
C. That which is left

3. SEGREANT

- A. With raised wings
B. One who divides
C. To set apart

4. SPIRACLE

- A. Breathing-hole
B. Tap-root
C. Long-winded preacher

5. THALASSIAN

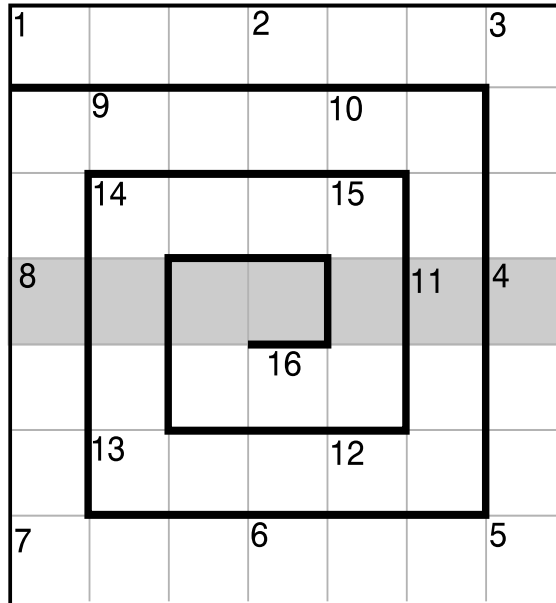
- A. Nuptial chamber
B. Relating to comedy
C. Marine

6. TRANSENNA

- A. A screen enclosing a shrine
B. The back of a boat
C. One who translates

Word Spirals

Starting from 1, fill in the grid in a clockwise direction with four-letter words. The last letter of each word becomes the first letter of the next word. If you have correctly filled in the grid there should be a seven-letter key word reading across from 8.



WORDSPIRAL 1

1. Forehead 2. Clean with water 3. Suspend 4. Soft steady light 5. Marries 6. Avoid deliberately 7. Close to 8. Fury 9. Compass point 10. Urban area 11. Tailed amphibian 12. Melt 13. Unwelcome plant 14. Fall in drops 15. Jetty 16. Drive on this.

Key word clue: Place in England

WORDSPIRAL 2

1. Hire cab 2. Notion 3. Partially open 4. American ostrich 5. Elderly 6. Deduct money from 7. Osculate 8. Prophet 9. Fairground entertainment 10. Gaelic 11. Goes wrong 12. Miss out 13. Chessman 14. Religious sisters 15. Halt, pull up 16. Entreaty.

Key word clue: Garment

WORDSPIRAL 3

1. First man 2. Mashed potatoes, informally 3. Comb this 4. Castle in chess 5. Brown seaweed 6. Heap 7. Consumes food 8. Brogue, say 9. Heroic 10. Traffic marker 11. Heinous 12. Luxuriant 13. Exaggerated publicity 14. Facility 15. Resound 16. Cooker.

Key word clue: Surname

WORDSPIRAL 4

1. Unable to hear 2. Beat with a whip 3. Horrific, bloodthirsty 4. Spun thread 5. Require 6. Aquatic bird 7. A tangle 8. Stumble 9. Chrysalis 10. Bushy hairstyle 11. Lubricates 12. Counterfoil 13. Violent robbery 14. Swimming competition 15. Adjoin 16. Plough.

Key word clue: Furniture item

WORDSPIRAL 5

1. Top cards 2. Hotpot 3. Sagacious 4. Revise 5. Carpet nail 6. Leg part 7. Egress 8. End part 9. Fibber 10. Corrosion 11. Sepulchre 12. Plant storage organ 13. Make beer 14. Compass point 15. Petty quarrel 16. A bench.

Key word clue: Insect

Remember When

The following events all occurred in a year in living memory. Can you guess the year?

1

- 1 Prince Harry was born
2 Carl Lewis won four Olympic gold medals
3 Indira Gandhi was assassinated
4 Dr David Jenkins was consecrated as Bishop of Durham



2

- 1 The Pope visited the Holy Land
2 Ian Fleming died
3 Spain won the European Football Championships
4 Ian Smith became PM of South Rhodesia



3

- 1 The international organisation Cominform was set up
2 Stanley Baldwin died
3 Princess Elizabeth married
4 Fresh meat ration was a shilling's worth weekly



4

- 1 David Steel was elected Liberal Party Leader
2 Lester Piggott won the Derby for a seventh time
3 America celebrated its bicentenary
4 Carry On favourite Sid James died



5

- 1 James Cagney died
2 Jacques Chirac became prime minister of France
3 Australia became legally independent
4 Mike Tyson became the youngest heavyweight boxing champion at 20



6

- 1 CND campaigners marched from London
2 Michael Jackson was born
3 Maltese prime minister Don Mintoff resigned
4 The first heart pacemaker was implanted



Four W's

1 WHO in 1898 became the first man to sail the world alone?
WHAT is world champion boxer Antonio Tarver nicknamed?
WHERE was Oscar-winning actress Charlize Theron born?
WHEN did the Ireland rugby union centre Mike Gibson make his international debut?

2 WHO wrote the poetry The Talking Horse and the Sad Girl and the Village Under the Sea?
WHAT is the profession of Steve Bell and Posy Simmonds?
WHERE is George Simenon's novel Tropic Moon set?
WHEN did Tanganyika become independent?

3 WHO accompanied James Cracknell in the 2005 Atlantic Rowing Race?
WHAT is the nationality of snooker player Quinten Hann?
WHERE in Africa is the capital city of Kigali?
WHEN did Scottish Claymores win the World Bowl in American Football?

4 WHO wrote the play The Night Of The Iguana?
WHAT trophy is awarded to European Footballer of the Year?
WHERE was the 2008 Rugby League World Cup held?
WHEN did Jeremy Spencer leave the group Fleetwood Mac?

5 WHO choreographed dance show Edward Scissorhands?
WHAT is the capital of Chechnya?
WHERE in Africa are the cities of Tororo and Soroti?
WHEN was the tennis player Tomas Berdych born?

Who am I?

one

An actress, I was born in Iowa in 1921. My last acting role was as a stand-in for Barbara Bel Geddes in Dallas. I had my own sitcom in the 1960s and my films included It's A Wonderful Life and From Here To Eternity, for which I won an Oscar.

two

A newsreader, I was born in Bridgend in 1961. I played an announcer in a recent series of Doctor Who. I regularly present the 10 O' Clock News on BBC1 and the Five O' Clock News on BBC News 24.

three

A singer, I was born in Liverpool in 1983. I was the fiancée of TV presenter Dave Berry. I was part of the original line-up of Atomic Kitten and went on to be a member of the Sugababes.

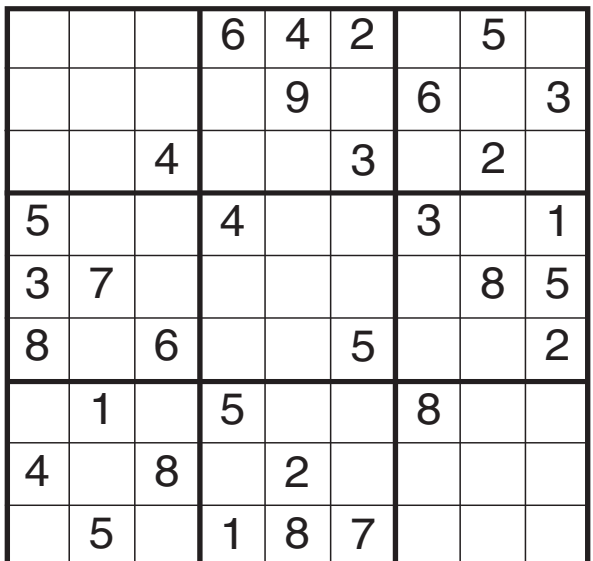
four

An author, I was born in Nuneaton in 1819. My real name was Mary Anne Evans, and I caused scandal in Victorian society for having a relationship with a married man. My well-known novels include Middlemarch and The Mill On The Floss.

five

A cricketer, I was born in Manchester in 1974. I was awarded the OBE in 2005 and I released the book Calling The Shots. I captained the England cricket team from 2003 to 2008.

Sudoku



SOLUTIONS
Word Wise 1. A. Liable to sin 2. A. Pliable 3. A. With raised wings 4. A. Breathing-hole 5. A. Nuptial chamber 6. A. A screen enclosing a shrine
Word Spirals 1. FOREHEAD 2. CLEAN 3. SUSPEND 4. SOFT 5. STEADY 6. LIGHT 7. MARRIES 8. DEDUCT 9. OSCULATE 10. PROPHET 11. FAIRGROUND 12. ENTERTAINMENT 13. GAELIC 14. GOES 15. WRONG 16. MISS
Remember When 1. 1964 2. 1964 3. 1964 4. 1964 5. 1964 6. 1964 7. 1964 8. 1964 9. 1964 10. 1964 11. 1964 12. 1964 13. 1964 14. 1964 15. 1964 16. 1964
Who am I? 1. Barbara Bel Geddes 2. Michael Vaughan 3. Ian Fleming 4. Stanley Baldwin 5. James Cagney 6. Jacques Chirac 7. Australia 8. Mike Tyson 9. Edward Scissorhands 10. Chechnya 11. Tororo 12. Soroti 13. Tomas Berdych 14. Dave Berry 15. Atomic Kitten 16. Sugababes 17. Mary Anne Evans 18. Mary Anne Evans 19. Mary Anne Evans 20. Mary Anne Evans 21. Mary Anne Evans 22. Mary Anne Evans 23. Mary Anne Evans 24. Mary Anne Evans 25. Mary Anne Evans 26. Mary Anne Evans 27. Mary Anne Evans 28. Mary Anne Evans 29. Mary Anne Evans 30. Mary Anne Evans 31. Mary Anne Evans 32. Mary Anne Evans 33. Mary Anne Evans 34. Mary Anne Evans 35. Mary Anne Evans 36. Mary Anne Evans 37. Mary Anne Evans 38. Mary Anne Evans 39. Mary Anne Evans 40. Mary Anne Evans 41. Mary Anne Evans 42. Mary Anne Evans 43. Mary Anne Evans 44. Mary Anne Evans 45. Mary Anne Evans 46. Mary Anne Evans 47. Mary Anne Evans 48. Mary Anne Evans 49. Mary Anne Evans 50. Mary Anne Evans 51. Mary Anne Evans 52. Mary Anne Evans 53. Mary Anne Evans 54. Mary Anne Evans 55. Mary Anne Evans 56. Mary Anne Evans 57. Mary Anne Evans 58. Mary Anne Evans 59. Mary Anne Evans 60. Mary Anne Evans 61. Mary Anne Evans 62. Mary Anne Evans 63. Mary Anne Evans 64. Mary Anne Evans 65. Mary Anne Evans 66. Mary Anne Evans 67. Mary Anne Evans 68. Mary Anne Evans 69. Mary Anne Evans 70. Mary Anne Evans 71. Mary Anne Evans 72. Mary Anne Evans 73. Mary Anne Evans 74. Mary Anne Evans 75. Mary Anne Evans 76. Mary Anne Evans 77. Mary Anne Evans 78. Mary Anne Evans 79. Mary Anne Evans 80. Mary Anne Evans 81. Mary Anne Evans 82. Mary Anne Evans 83. Mary Anne Evans 84. Mary Anne Evans 85. Mary Anne Evans 86. Mary Anne Evans 87. Mary Anne Evans 88. Mary Anne Evans 89. Mary Anne Evans 90. Mary Anne Evans 91. Mary Anne Evans 92. Mary Anne Evans 93. Mary Anne Evans 94. Mary Anne Evans 95. Mary Anne Evans 96. Mary Anne Evans 97. Mary Anne Evans 98. Mary Anne Evans 99. Mary Anne Evans 100. Mary Anne Evans



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What's On! Stourbridge

June is a pearl in the Oyster

June Tabor & Oysterband Town Hall, Birmingham
IT'S been an amazing year for June Tabor & Oysterband, both weighed down with their trophies from the 2012 Radio2 Folk Awards and their album Ragged Kingdom earning acclaim.

Oysterband were first on stage led by John Jones. They laid down the intro for June to quietly walk on stage before moving into Mississippi Summer accompanied by the fiddle and squeezebox.

They then slipped easily into anti-war song Fountains Flowing.

The band pulled out a cover version of the Velvet Underground's All Tomorrow's Parties, and June then made one of her many exits for John to take over. She was soon back for one of the highlights, the capella (When I Was No But) Sweet Sixteen with its magnificent harmonies.

Danny Farragher

Comic's town show
POLITICAL activist and comedian Mark Thomas will bring his award-winning show Bravo Figaro to Stourbridge.

The performance, about his father, who has progressive supranuclear palsy, and how Mark put on an opera for him in his bungalow, will be at Stourbridge Town Hall on February 15.

The pantomime season is here again... oh yes it is!

THE FESTIVE season is almost upon us and that means pantomime time and a feast of family entertainment at the region's theatres.



Brian Conley and Lesley Joseph star in the Birmingham Hippodrome panto

The second city's big panto is Robinson Crusoe and the Caribbean Pirates (December 15-January 29) with jungle escapee Brian Conley making his sixth panto appearance at the Hippodrome, this time with Birds of a Feather star Lesley Joseph.

Beanstalk

The Grand in Wolverhampton reunites Coronation Street pair Sherrie Hewson and Ken Morley in Jack and the Beanstalk (until January 20), plus Keith Harris with Orville the Duck and Cuddles.

Potteries favourite Jonathan Wilkes is Buttons in Cinderella at The Regent in Stoke (Dec 13-Jan 4).

Other children's shows include Birmingham Rep's Wind in the Willows (until Jan 19) at the Crescent Theatre and James and the Giant Peach (until February 2) at the Old Rep, both Birmingham.

The Royal Shakespeare Company present The Mouse and His Child in Stratford until January 12.

Strictly stars for NIA next month



West End star Denise Van Outen

WITH just a couple of weeks until the Strictly Come Dancing grand final on TV, the celebrities appearing at the NIA in Birmingham as part of the live show have been announced.

West End star Denise Van Outen and former England cricketer Phil Tufnell



GB Olympic gymnast Louis Smith

are the final celebrities added to the tour calling at Birmingham for the weekend of January 18-20.

Judges

They join Tracey Beaker star Dani Harmer, TV presenter Fern Britton,



Popular actress Lisa Riley

actress Lisa Riley, Olympian Louis Smith and former England cricket captain Michael Vaughan. Kate Thornton hosts and the judges will be Craig Revel Horwood, Len Goodman and Bruno Tonioli.

Tickets from £35 to £65 plus fees.

The Docs enjoying 25th year

The Saw Doctors
Wulfrun Hall
Wolverhampton

IT may be a quarter of a century since the Galway Gang hit the music scene but The Saw Doctors show no signs of slowing down or taking things easy if the energy and enthusiasm they brought to Wolves is anything to go by.

Davy Carton, Leo Moran and newest recruit Lindsey Cleary came on to a roaring welcome, opening with World of Good and from then on there was no let up.

They gave the crowd what they wanted and they lapped up numbers such as Tommy K, Will It Never Stop Raining and To Win Just Once.

They played loud and long and gave bigger and better versions of some of their old favourites as they took their fans on a musical journey through their career with Green and Red of Mayo, letting Leo loose on the guitar before the rest of the band got in on the act.

With I'll Be On My Way, I Useta Love Her and Bless Me Father the fans soaked up every note. In the encore the crowd went mental on hearing the opening notes of Joyce Country Celli Band which led on to the big finish of their unofficial anthem N17 and finally Hay Ride.

Danny Farragher

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What's On!

SATURDAY'S TV 15.12.12

Listings supplied by Press Association

CHOICE



Sarah Harding

10 Years of Girls Aloud

ITV1, 9pm
Winning a TV talent show is no guarantee of a lasting career – just ask One True Voice, the boy band formed on the show Popstars: The Rivals in 2002. So, we can't begrudge their fellow winners, Girls Aloud, celebrating their 10th anniversary with a new single and a reunion. This documentary looks back at how Nadine Coyle, Sarah Harding, Nicola Roberts, Kimberley Walsh and Cheryl Cole were brought together in the first place, and looks at why they became one of Britain's biggest girl groups. We also follow the girls as they prepare for their comeback.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** Baking Made Easy. (R) **12.00** BBC News. Regional News: Weather. **12.15** Football Focus. **1.00** Bargain Hunt. (R) **1.30** Gymnastics: World Cup. **4.00** Final Score. **5.25** BBC News: Regional News: Weather. **5.45** A Question of Sport: Sports Personality 2012 Special. **6.30** **Strictly Come Dancing.** Bruce Forsyth and Tess Daly host the semi-final, in which the five remaining couples battle it out on the ballroom floor for a coveted place in next week's final. **8.15** **Merlin.** Morgana is torn between loyalty and love, unaware his choice will shape Camelot's destiny – and as the drums of war beat louder, Merlin feels trapped by the cruel circle of fate. **9.00** **The National Lottery Saturday Night Draws.** OJ Borg presents as the balls are set rolling to decide the all-important numbers. Including the Lotto and Thunderball draws and Lotto Plus 5 results. **9.15** **Casualty.** Tensions rise once again between Tom and Dominic as they argue over the treatment of a baby with severe hypothermia, while Dylan finally admits he has not moved on from Sam. **10.05** **BBC News: Weather.** **10.25** **Match of the Day.** Gary Lineker presents highlights of today's Premier League clashes, including Newcastle United v Manchester City and Manchester United v Sunderland. National Lottery Update. **11.45** **The Football League Show.** **1.00** Weatherview. **1.05** BBC News.

BBC2

6.00 CBeebies. **12.00** Animal Park. (R) **1.00** Coast. (R) **1.20** Film: Holiday Affair. (1949) **2.45** Film: The War Lover. (1962) **4.30** Escape to the Country. (R) **5.30** Flop It! (R) **6.30** **The Hairy Bikers: Mums Know Best at Christmas.** Si King and Dave Myers find out what women are cooking for their families over the festive period, including roast goose and salted cured lamb steamed over birch twigs. (R) **7.30** **Don't Panic! The Dad's Army Story.** Victoria Wood pays tribute to the timeless humour of Dad's Army, introducing classic moments from the long-running series. Contributors include Ian Lavender and Clive Dunn. (R) **8.20** **Dad's Army.** Mainwaring's men face the might of a rival platoon in a battle to prove their worth. Arthur Lowe and John Le Mesurier play the superannuated soldiers. (R) **9.20** **Clive Dunn: A Tribute.** Family, colleagues and friends pay tribute to much-loved actor Clive Dunn, who died in November and was best known for his role as Lance-Corporal Jones in classic sitcom Dad's Army. **10.00** **Jools Holland: My Life in Music.** The musician and Later host talks about his life and career, with contributions by Tom Jones, Hugh Laurie, Stephen Fry, Paul Weller, Bob Geldof and Vic Reeves. **11.00** **Later with Jools Holland and Friends.** A compilation of Jools' performances with his guests. **12.00** Film: Savage Grace. (2007) **1.30** Film: Priceless. (2006) **3.10** Close.

ITV1

6.00 CITV: Babar and the Adventures of Badou. **6.10** Babar and the Adventures of Badou. (R) **6.25** The Hive. (R) **6.35** The Hive. (R) **6.45** The Hive. (R) **6.50** Animals. (R) **7.00** Animals. (R) **7.25** Almost Naked Animals. (R) **7.40** Almost Naked Animals. (R) **7.50** Horrid Henry. (R) **8.05** Horrid Henry. (R) **8.15** Horrid Henry. (R) **8.30** Fort Boyard Ultimate Challenge. **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. **10.20** The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. **11.15** Murder, She Wrote. (R) **12.20** ITV News: Weather. **12.30** Holiday Home Sweet Home. **2.30** Midsomer Murders. (R) **4.25** All Star Family Fortunes. (R) **5.15** Regional Programme: Weather. **5.45** Film: Back to the Future Part II. (1989) **7.40** **Take Me Out Celebrity Christmas Special.** Keith Lemon, Joe Swash and Matt Johnson try to impress a line-up of 30 single women from series past and present and win a date to the Isle of Fernandos. Last in the series. **9.00** **10 Years of Girls Aloud.** The story of the girl group, from their formation on Popstars: The Rivals in 2002 to the release of their greatest hits album this year, featuring interviews with all five members. **10.20** ITV News: Weather. **10.35** Michael Buble: Home for Christmas. (R) **11.50** Film: Captivity. (2007) Horror. With Eliza Cuthbert. **1.15** The Store. ITV News: Headlines. **3.00** In Plain Sight. (R) **3.40** ITV Nightvision. **5.30** ITV Morning News.

CHANNEL 4

6.10 The Hoobs. (R) **6.35** The Grid. (R) **7.00** Teenage Superhumans. **7.55** The Morning Line. **8.55** T4: Rockcorps 2012. **9.10** T4: The Hobbit: T4 Movie Special. **9.45** T4: Will & Grace. (R) **10.15** T4: Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **10.45** T4: Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **11.15** T4: Frasier. (R) **11.40** T4: Frasier. (R) **12.10** T4: The Big Bang Theory. (R) **12.40** T4: The Simpsons. (R) **1.45** Channel 4 Racing. **3.55** The Simpsons. (R) **4.25** Come Dine with Me: Ireland. **4.55** Come Dine with Me: Ireland. **5.25** Come Dine with Me: Ireland. **6.00** **Come Dine with Me: Ireland.** Yoga teacher Dervil Fleming hosts the fourth dinner party from Co Kerry. **6.30** **Come Dine with Me: Ireland.** Music teacher Sean Treacy hosts the final dinner party. **6.55** Channel 4 News. **7.25** **Thoughtful.** Religious beliefs and the law. **7.30** **Heston's Fantastic Food.** Heston Blumenthal makes super-sized versions of lunchbox favourites. (R) **8.30** **Stephen Fry: Gadget Man.** The actor delves into the world of technology. (R) **9.00** **Film: The Twilight Saga: Eclipse.** (2010) Premiere. Bella Swan's supernatural love triangle threatens to ignite a conflict between vampires and werewolves. Romantic fantasy sequel, with Kristen Stewart and Robert Pattinson. **11.30** **Film: Remember Me.** (2010) Premiere. Romantic drama, starring Robert Pattinson. **1.30** Film: The Escapist. (2008) **3.10** Hollyoaks. **5.20** Countdown.

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **10.00** Power Rangers: Super Samurai. **10.35** ThunderCats. **11.10** Chinese Food in Minutes. (R) **11.20** Highland Emergency. (R) **11.55** The Gadget Show. (R) **12.55** Chris Tarrant: Extreme Railways. (R) **1.55** Film: A Grandpa for Christmas. (2007) Family comedy, starring Ernest Borgnine. **3.35** Film: Meet the Santas. (2005) Fantasy comedy sequel, with Steve Guttenberg. **5.20** 5 News Weekend. **5.25** Film: Mrs Miracle. (2009) A talented housekeeper helps a widowed father of twin boys to turn his life around and rediscover his love of music. Family drama, starring Doris Roberts and James Van Der Beek. **7.20** **Film: An Old Fashioned Christmas.** (2010) Premiere. A wealthy woman visits an Irish earl in the hope that he can help her grand-daughter's literary career. Period drama sequel, with Jacqueline Bisset and Catherine Steadman. **9.00** **Greatest Christmas TV Moments.** Countdown of 50 festive TV highlights, featuring Gavin & Stacey, Morecambe and Wise, Only Fools and Horses, Wallace and Gromit, Doctor Who, Top of the Pops and The Royle Family. (R) **11.55** **Inside Hollywood.** Magazine show, with location reports, news and views from behind the scenes. **12.00** SuperCasino. Live interactive gaming. **4.00** Michaela's Wild Challenge. Michaela Strachan gets groomed by monkeys. (R) **4.25** Great Artists. (R) **4.50** Rough Guide to Beaches. (R) **5.05** Hana's Helpline. (R) **5.15** The Milkshake! Show. (R) **5.40** Thomas & Friends. (R) **5.50** Roary the Racing Car. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three
7.00 Doctor Who **8.05** Top Gear **9.15** Russell Howard's Good News Extra **10.00** Film: Kill Bill: Vol 1 (2003) **11.45** Family Guy
BBC Four
7.00 Around the World in 60 Minutes **8.00** David Attenborough's First Life **9.00** The Killing III **11.00** Elvis in Las Vegas
ITV2
3.50 The Xtra Factor: Girls Best & Worst Ever **4.50** The Xtra Factor: Boys Best & Worst Ever **5.50** The Xtra Factor: Groups Best & Worst Ever **6.50** The Xtra Factor: Overs Best & Worst Ever **7.55** The Xtra Factor: Judges Best & Worst Ever **9.00** Take Me Out: The Gossip Celebrity Christmas Special **9.45** Film: Sleepy Hollow (1999) **11.55** A Celebrity Juicemas Carol – Chapter 1
ITV3
5.55 Murder, She Wrote **7.00** Christmas Lights **8.30** Fast Freddie, the Widow and Me **10.00** Bomb Girls **11.00** Film: Sleepers (1996)
ITV4
3.55 Film: Follow a Star (1959) Christmas Lights **5.00** River Monsters **9.00** Amir Khan: Sports Life Stories **10.00** Film: Unleashed (2005)
E4
7.00 How I Met Your Mother **8.00** Rules of Engagement **9.00** Derren Brown: The Secret of Luck **10.00** Film: Hostage (2005)
Film4
3.05 The Poseidon Adventure (1972) **5.25** Ice Age: The Meltdown (2006) **7.10** The Wedding Date (2005) **8.50** The Hobbit Interview Special **9.00** Transporter 3 (2008) Action thriller sequel, starring Jason Statham. **11.05** The Final Destination (2009)

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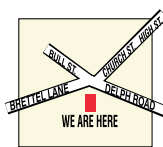
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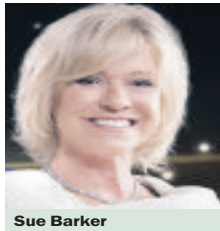


What's On!

SUNDAY'S TV 16.12.12

Listings supplied by Press Association

CHOICE



Sue Barker

Sports Personality of the Year 2012

BBC1, 7.30pm

The big question in 2012 isn't who will win the BBC Sports Personality of the Year award, but who won't. It's been such an extraordinary period for British sport that there are some massive names who won't even make it to the shortlist. After becoming the first Brit to win a Grand Slam event for decades, not to mention his Olympic medals in the men's singles and mixed doubles, you might expect Andy Murray to be a shoe-in. But he'll face stiff opposition from current favourite, cyclist Bradley Wiggins and Mo Farah.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **7.40** Match of the Day. (R) **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** Fern Britton Meets Daniel O'Donnell. **11.00** Sunday Politics: Weather for the Week Ahead. **12.25** Countryfile. (R) **1.20** Bargain Hunt. (R) **2.05** Regional Programme. **3.05** Call the Midwife. (R) **4.05** Liffeline. **4.15** Songs of Praise. **4.55** Nigel Slater's 12 Tastes of Christmas. (R) **5.25** BBC News: Regional News: Weather. **5.50** Countryfile.

6.50 Strictly Come Dancing: The Results. Tess Daly and Claudia Winkelman announce which two couples will be hanging up their dancing shoes, determining the line-up for next week's final. Katherine Jenkins also performs.

7.30 Sports Personality of the Year 2012. Sue Barker, Gary Lineker and Clare Balding present this year's ceremony live from the Excel in London, where the successor to Mark Cavendish will be crowned from a shortlist of 12.

10.05 BBC News: Regional News: Weather.

10.30 Match of the Day 2. Colin Murray reviews the day's Premier League action, featuring Tottenham Hotspur v Swansea City at White Hart Lane and West Bromwich Albion v West Ham United at the Hawthorns.

11.30 The Graham Norton Show. With Martin Freeman, Dawn French, Emma Thompson, Lee Mack and Girls Aloud. (R)

12.15 Film: Three Fugitives (1989). **1.50** Westview. **1.55** Sign Zone: Film 2012. (R) **2.25** Holby City. (R) **3.25** Great British Food Revival. (R) **4.25** BBC News.

BBC2

6.00 CBeebies. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **11.30** Nigella's Christmas Kitchen. (R) **12.00** Film: Follow the Fleet. (1936). **1.50** Film: Shall We Dance? (1937). **3.35** Animal Park. (R) **4.05** Coast. (R) **5.00** Film It! (R)

6.00 Cuba with Simon Reeve. The broadcaster heads to the Caribbean to look at the effects of the past two years of economic liberalisation, exploring the impact it has had on Cubans and their society. (R)

7.00 The Great Spanish Crash. Paul Mason travels to Spain to investigate how its once-thriving economy has become the latest casualty of the Eurozone crisis and left the country in need of a bailout.

8.00 Fawcett Towers. Basil decides to enhance the hotel's reputation with an exclusive night of gourmet cuisine. Unfortunately, his new chef is distracted by hapless waiter Manuel. (R)

8.30 Film: Calendar Girls. (2003) Members of a Yorkshire branch of the Women's Institute cause controversy when they pose nude for a charity calendar. Fact-based comedy, starring Helen Mirren and Julie Walters.

10.15 Qi XL. Extended edition.

11.00 Never Mind the Buzzcocks. Liza Tarbuck hosts, with guests Rita Ora, Labrinth, Jameela Jamil and Jason Manford. (R)

11.30 Film: Surviving Christmas. (2004) Family comedy, starring Ben Affleck.

12.55 Film: Body Heat. (1981) **2.45** BBC News. **4.25** The Super League Show. **5.25** Close.

ITV1

6.00 CITV: Engie Benji. **6.10** Babar and the Adventures of Badou. (R) **6.25** Babar and the Adventures of Badou. (R) **6.35** Signed Stories. (R) **6.45** Monk. (R) **6.50** Animals. (R) **7.00** Animals. (R) **7.05** Fleabag Monkeyface. (R) **7.15** Fleabag Monkeyface. (R) **7.30** Almost Naked Animals. (R) **7.40** Almost Naked Animals. (R) **7.50** Almost Naked Animals. (R) **8.00** Big Time Rush. **8.30** Fort Boyard Ultimate Challenge. **9.25** TV News. **9.30** There's No Taste Like Home. (R) **10.30** Dinner Date. (R) **11.30** Dickinson's Real Deal. (R) **12.30** TV News: Weather. **12.35** Film: Carry On Don't Lose Your Head. (1966) **2.20** The X Factor Results. (R) **4.20** Regional Programme: Weather. **4.40** TV News: Weather. **4.50** Film: E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial. (1982)

7.00 Happy Birthday E.T. Celebrating the 30th anniversary of E.T.: The Extra-Terrestrial, this documentary explores the making of Steven Spielberg's classic film, with contributions by some of the cast.

8.00 The Making of a Lady. A penniless woman marries a lord for money, rather than love, but her new life of wealth brings envy and danger. Period drama, starring Lydia Wilson.

9.45 ITV News: Weather.

10.00 Film: I Am Legend. (2007) Sci-fi thriller, starring Will Smith.

11.50 Pensioners Behind Bars. The growing number of over-60s doing time for a criminal offence. (R)

12.40 The Store: ITV News Headlines. **2.40** Motorsport UK. **3.30** ITV Nightscreen. **5.30** ITV Morning News.

CHANNEL 4

6.05 Sali Mali. (R) **6.10** The Hoobs. (R) **7.00** The Grid. **7.30** Survival of the Fittest. **8.00** Will & Grace. (R) **8.25** Frasier. (R) **8.55** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **11.50** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **12.20** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **12.45** The Simpsons. (R) **1.15** The Simpsons. (R) **1.45** Deal or No Deal. **2.45** Film: Hocus Pocus. (1993) **4.40** Film: Deck the Halls. (2006)

4.40 Channel 4 News.

6.50 The Political Slot. Education minister Elizabeth Truss MP talks about free schools.

6.55 4thought.tv. Members of the public reflect on religious issues.

7.00 Come Dine with Me Christmas Special. Christmas hitmakers Maizie Williams of Boney M and Jona Lewie are joined by soul singer VV Brown and DJ Toby Anstis for a week of festive dinner parties.

8.00 River Cottage: Three Go Mad at Christmas. Hugh Fearnley-Whittingstall is joined by Stephen Mangan, Mark Heap and Kathy Burke for a festive cookery extravaganza on the River Cottage farm.

9.00 Homeland. Carrie begins to suspect there is a mole in the CIA.

10.00 Peep Show. Jeremy moves in with Super Hans.

10.35 Film: I Love You Phillip Morris. (2009) Premiere. Romantic comedy drama, with Jim Carrey and Evan McGregor.

12.25 8 Out of 10 Cats: Best Bits. **12.55** American Football Live. **4.45** Grudge Match. (R) **4.55** Deal or No Deal. (R) **5.50** Quick Bakes with Eric Lanlard. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Peppa Pig. **6.05** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **6.15** Fifi and the Flowerbuds. (R) **6.25** Bert and Ernie's Great Adventures. (R) **6.30** The Mr Men Show. (R) **6.45** Olive the Ostrich. **6.50** Abby's Flying Fairy School. (R) **7.00** Roobarb and Custard Too. (R) **7.10** Bananas in Pyjamas. (R) **7.25** Animal Antics. (R) **7.30** Make Way for Noddy. (R) **7.40** City of Friends. (R) **7.50** Little Princess. (R) **8.05** The Adventures of Bottle Top Bill and His Best Friend Corky. (R) **8.25** Angelina Ballerina. **8.40** Rupert Bear. **8.55** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **9.10** Toby's Travelling Circus. (R) **9.25** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **9.40** Jelly Jam. (R) **10.00** Power Rangers: Super Samurai. **10.35** ThunderCats. **11.10** Chinese Food in Minutes. (R) **11.15** Highland Emergency. (R) **11.45** Film: Mr St Nick. (2002) **1.30** Film: Battle of the Bulbs. (2010) **3.15** Film: All I Want for Christmas. (2007) **5.00** Film: The Da Vinci Code. (2006)

7.55 5 News Weekend.

8.00 Film: Glee. (2006) A man gets his hands on a remote control that allows him to fast-forward through the dull parts of his life. Comedy, starring Adam Sandler.

10.00 Film: Zack and Miri Make a Porno. (2008) Premiere. Two friends plan to shoot a porn film, but find having sex for the cameras makes them rethink their feelings for each other. Comedy, with Seth Rogen and Elizabeth Banks.

11.55 World's Craziest Police Pursuits 2. (R)

12.55 SuperCasino. **4.00** House Doctor. (R) **4.50** Rough Guide to Cities. (R) **5.05** Hansel & Gretel. (R) **5.15** The Milkshake! Show. (R) **5.40** Thomas & Friends. (R) **5.50** Roary the Racing Car. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three
7.00 Merlin **7.50** Film: The Chronicles of Narnia: The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe (2005) **10.00** Him & Her **10.30** Family Guy **11.15** American Dad!

BBC Four
7.00 The Roasts of Christmas Past **8.00** A Very English Winter: The Unthanks **9.00** Chas & Dave: Last Orders **10.00** Storyville: The Other Irish Travellers **11.00** Film: The Hunter (2010)

ITV2
3.35 Take Me Out Celebrity Christmas Special **4.50** Take Me Out: The Gossip Celebrity Christmas Special **5.35** Film: The Mummy Returns (2001) **8.00** The Xtra Factor: Winner's Story 2012 **9.00** Film: Gladiator (2000)

ITV3
3.40 Agatha Christie's Poirot **5.55** Lewis **7.55** Film: Housesitter (1991) **10.00** A Is for Acid. The story of killer John George Haigh, starring Martin Clunes.

ITV4
2.05 Film: Support Your Local Gunfighter (1971) **4.00** Film: Weekend at Bernie's (1989) **6.00** Film: Without a Clue (1988) **8.15** Film: Jackie Chan's First Strike (1996) **10.00** Film: Enter the Dragon (1973)

E4
3.40 The Big Bang Theory **8.00** Film: Just My Luck (2006) **10.00** Misfits **11.00** The Inbetweeners **Film4**

2.45 The Belles of St Trinian's (1954) **4.35** The Remains of the Day (1993) **7.15** Jumper (2008) A man with the ability to teleport is hunted by a secret religious society determined to wipe out all of his kind. Fantasy thriller, with Hayden Christensen. **9.00** Die Hard (1988) **11.40** Slither (2006)

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What's On!

Film Choices

MONDAY

I Now Pronounce You Chuck & Larry, ITV1, 10.35pm
A fireman asks a male colleague to pretend to marry him to get round a hitch with his late wife's life insurance policy. Their plan is thrown off course when an overzealous city official begins to doubt the pair's relationship is genuine, and decides to conduct an investigation. Comedy, starring Adam Sandler, Kevin James, Steve Buscemi, Jessica Biel, Dan Aykroyd, Ving Rhames, Nicholas Turturro and Richard Chamberlain. (2007)

TUESDAY

The Unbearable Lightness of Being, BBC1, 11.35pm
A successful surgeon leads a carefree life in 1960s Czechoslovakia, and pursues complicated romances with two women – a Bohemian artist and a bookish small-town woman. Their lives are thrown into chaos when the country faces invasion by Soviet forces. Drama based on Milan Kundera's novel, starring Daniel Day-Lewis, Juliette Binoche, Lena Olin, Derek de Lint, Erland Josephson, Pavel Landovsky, Stellan Skarsgård, Pascale Kalensky. (1988)

WEDNESDAY

The Santa Suit, Channel 5, 3.15pm

A greedy executive hires men dressed as Santa Claus to sell his company's merchandise, but the real Father Christmas takes exception to being exploited and casts a spell that turns the businessman into one of the impersonators. As he plays the part of Santa, he acquires some much-needed festive spirit. Comedy, starring Kevin Sorbo and Jodie Dowdall. (2010)



Last Chance Harvey, Thursday, BBC2, 9pm

THURSDAY

Last Chance Harvey, BBC2, 9pm

A miserable New Yorker travels to London for his estranged daughter's wedding, but is devastated to find his ex-wife's new husband is to give the bride away instead of him. While trying to return home, he bumps into a woman feeling equally unfulfilled in her life, and their fledgling romance inspires them both to face up to their problems. Romantic drama, with Dustin Hoffman, Emma Thompson, Eileen Atkins, Kathy Baker, Liane Balaban, James Brolin, Richard Schiff, Wendy Mae Brown. (2008)

FRIDAY

Mistletoe Over Manhattan, Channel 5, 3.10pm

Santa Claus' wife goes to New York to perform a Christmas miracle and give her husband fresh inspiration. She befriends a cop who is in the midst of a divorce and offers to become a nanny to his children. She then discovers he still loves his wife, and tries to find a way to bring them back together. Christmas fantasy, starring Tricia Helfer and Greg Bryk. (2011)

Pick of the Week

Our sporting heroes get their just rewards

Whenever the show is broadcast, fans know that Christmas is just around the corner – but who will be celebrating the festive season with a shiny new trophy on the mantelpiece as well as a turkey in the oven?

The big question this year, of course, isn't who will win the main prize, but who won't.

It's been such an extraordinary period for British sport that there will be some massive names who won't even make it to the shortlist when, in other years, they might have been expected to walk away with the trophy.

For a start, Olympic gold medalists Charlotte Dujardin, Greg Rutherford, Victoria Pendleton, Laura Trott and Alistair Brownlee, and Europe's Ryder Cup hero Ian Poulter, have not made the final 12.

After becoming the first Brit to win a Grand Slam event for decades, not to mention his Olympic medals in the men's singles and mixed doubles, you might expect Andy Murray to be a shoe-in.

But then there's Bradley Wiggins to consider. He's not only our first-ever

winner of the Tour de France, he also won gold at the Games and is the current favourite to triumph again here.

Athletes Mo Farah and Jessica Ennis are also in the running (no pun intended), while Ben Ainslie's achievement in becoming the Olympics' most decorated sailor is recognised.

Also making the shortlist are rower Katharine Grainger, boxer Nicola Adams, Wiggins' cycling team mate Chris Hoy, golfer Rory McIlroy and Paralympians David Weir, Ellie Simmonds and Sarah Storey.

At least last year's accusations of sexism, which came after no women made the shortlist, can't be levelled at the Beeb this time.

Not only are there lots of females in the running for the main prize, how the nominees are decided has been changed too.

This time, a panel comprised of various BBC executives and presenters, newspaper sports editors, former nominees (this year's are Steve Redgrave, Tanni Grey-Thompson and Denise Lewis) and Sue Campbell, chair of UK Sport, has

been put together to come up with 12 worthy names.

The panel will also choose the 1st, 2nd and 3rd places for the Team of the Year, Overseas Personality of the Year and Coach of the Year awards. Other awards on the night will again be Young Sports Personality of the Year and Unsung Hero, which will continue to be decided by the existing specialist panel system and the Lifetime Achievement and Helen Rollason Awards, which will be decided by the Board of BBC Sport.

Barbara Slater, director BBC sport, says: "This year's sports personality of the year will be a celebration of what has been a truly unique year for sport in the UK. We are incredibly proud to be hosting the sporting grand finale for such a remarkable year."

Sue Barker, Gary Lineker and Clare Balding (whose own star rose thanks to her outstanding presenting skills during the BBC's coverage of the Olympics and Channel 4's hosting of the Paralympics) are the hosts.

And no matter what happens, next year's event is going to have a lot to live up to.



Sports Personality of the Year 2012, Sunday, BBC1, 7.30pm

Best of the Rest

Monday

Britain's Secret Terror Squad: Panorama, BBC1, 9pm

It seems that these days, there's nary a day goes by without some thrilling drama or other focusing on the cloak-and-dagger lives of people within the shady world of counter-terrorism. But just how grounded in reality are they? The answer is, generally, not very – yet 40 years ago, a unit existed which is far stranger than fiction, and ten times as shocking. For two years in the early 1970s, the British Army ran an undercover squad that operated outside the law, with orders to shoot terrorists on sight. They believe it saved lives, but in this documentary, reporter John Ware uncovers evidence that the unit may also have killed innocent civilians.

Bad Santas

Channel 4, 9pm

If you thought that all it took to be a Santa was a red suit and a beard, this two-part documentary should make you think again. It follows a group of unemployed men in their fifties, who are looking to make a fresh start by enrolling in one of the UK's most successful Santa schools (yes, apparently there is more than one). Under the watchful eye of James Lovell, Managing Director of the intriguingly named Ministry of Fun, the men will have to pass a series of challenges, but how many of the Santa students will graduate to a grotto of their own?

Tuesday

Inside Guinness World Records, ITV1, 8pm

It's 40 years since the much-missed Roy Castle

first presented Record Breakers, the BBC TV kids' show which captured the imaginations of millions. Whether it was the sight of him and a few dozen extras tap-dancing around the courtyard to BBC TV centre while Norris McWhirter looked on, or his reports on world records, for two decades Roy piqued the interest of many, and also helped boost sales of The Guinness Book of Records. Now the conclusion of this documentary provides a close access perspective on what drives the extraordinary and colourful characters that hold World Records. They include Wilma Cooner, the oldest competitive female bodybuilder, and Tom Lackey, the oldest aerobically wing walker.

Wednesday

The Christmas No 1 Story, BBC2, 9pm

In Britain, predicting what will be at the top of the charts on December 25 has become a festive tradition up there with trimming the tree, singing carols and moaning about how early the supermarkets start hawking their seasonal wares. But just why has that number one slot become so important, and what do the chart-toppers of Christmas past tell us about the tastes of the Great British record-buying public? That's what this documentary aims to find out, as it traces the story of the Christmas number one, from Harry Belafonte, to last year's single by the Military Wives, taking in everyone from the Beatles to Benny Hill along the way.

The Twins Who Share a Body

Channel 4, 10pm

Indian twins Sohna and Mohna are two of the world's most incredible children – but their story isn't an easy one to hear. They're celebrating their ninth birthday; however that in itself is an amazing achievement, as the siblings share just one body. Their condition (known as dicephalic parapagus conjoined twins) affects only one in a million, and so this documentary questions just how they manage to live a fulfilled life when they are two conscious beings in one body. Meanwhile, doctors desperately try to find out whether the twins will always be just one body, or if it would be possible for them to be separated and one life sacrificed.

Thursday

Young Apprentice, BBC1, 8pm

It's been eight weeks since the latest batch of budding business brains first set foot in Alan Sugar's legendary boardroom, and every challenge they have undertaken has been building up to this point. The hopefuls have been dropping like flies, and after last week's double-firing, which followed a festival-based task in which the two teams of three were challenged to flog products at

open-air world music event Womad, there are now just four of the original 12 contestants remaining. Let's hope they have their CVs in order, because there's everything – including a £25,000 investment in their business – to play for in this final episode.

Friday

Text Santa, ITV1, 8pm

The BBC is proud of Children in Need, but ITV isn't shoddy in the telephone stakes either. Okay, so the broadcaster hasn't had one that's run for as long as the BBC has, but in Text Santa, it's found a format that could match it. Last year it made its debut, raising more than £4million for six charities. This year, it's hoped that total will be surpassed, with Age UK, Anthony Nolan, Carers UK, Marie Curie Cancer Care, Together for Short Lives and Whizz-Kidz all set to benefit. Ant & Dec, Phillip Schofield, Holly Willoughby, Christine Bleakley and Paddy McGuinness will all be on hand to introduce star acts and sketches featuring famous faces and TV shows.

QI

BBC2, 10pm

One of Danny Baker's greatest strengths, aside from being a fine DJ, is his ability to pep up panel games such as Shooting Stars, Have I Got News For You, and this show. Being a font of knowledge, the 55-year-old Londoner could even give Stephen Fry a run for his money in the trivia stakes, but how will he fare in this festive edition of the engaging quiz? Now there's a chance to find out as he joins Sarah Millican, Phill Jupitus and regular panellist Alan Davies.

Text Santa, Friday, ITV1, 8pm

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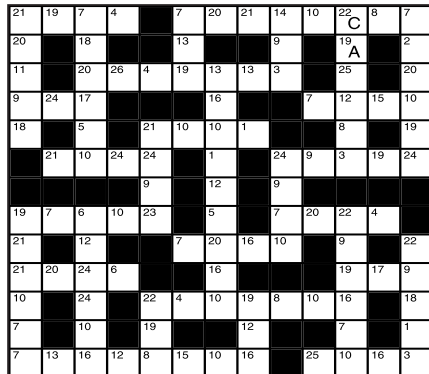
What's On!

Brain Gym

No.199

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

C	I	H	F	V	L	W	B	E	X	Q	G	D
R	U	K	Z	N	Y	P	O	M	J	T	A	S

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Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

Cryptic Clues:

Across

- Sea mail going astray causes uneasiness (7)
- Possibly loves to work out crossword clues (5)
- Agencies that inform me before help is returned (5)
- Possibly train as a mechanic (7)
- Hostility to dogs, for example? (3,8)
- A procession of empty protest (6,5)
- Is the parson shortly back on form? (7)
- An all-round measure (5)
- It gets wetter as it dries (5)
- Have a flying start? (4,3)

Down

- It goes on record (5)
- Figure a girl is showing ill-will (6)
- Finally refuse custom (3)
- If run down they will pick you up (6)
- A flighty individual (7)
- He's at liberty to be a privileged citizen (7)
- Continue to flirt? (5,2)
- Seasonal blazer (4-3)
- Inquire inside to obtain an engine part (6)
- The number increases in emergencies (6)
- People in office? (5)
- Don't allow a section to be played (3)

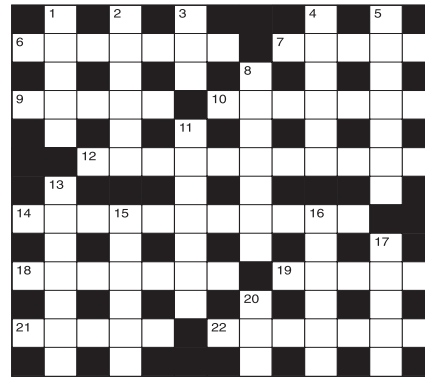
Quick Clues:

Across

- Conveyance (7)
- Extreme (5)
- Blemish (5)
- Liberate (7)
- Swindle (11)
- Coffeur (11)
- Excursionist (7)
- Spurious (5)
- Deficient (5)
- Get (7)

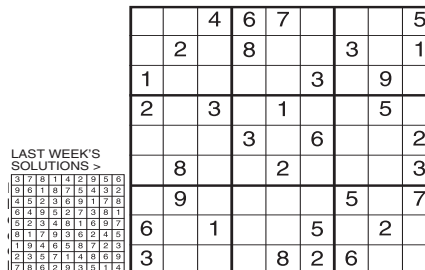
Down

- Kingly (5)
- Victor (6)
- Former (3)
- Content (6)
- Entreat (7)
- Petition (7)
- Vagary (7)
- Fall out (7)
- Departure (6)
- Haste (5)
- Deed (3)



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS:
CRYPTIC - Across: 1 Clothes-mad; 7 Ozone; 8 Swallow; 10 Cremated; 11 Evil; 13 Shrimp; 15 Scarab; 17 Nick; 18 Research; 21 Several; 22 Mason; 23 Archimedes. Down: 1 Close; 2 Open arms; 3 Hasten; 4 Star; 5 All over; 6 Torch songs; 9 Well behind; 12 Screamed; 14 Recover; 16 Bedlam; 19 Rests; 20 Arch. QUICK - Across: 1 Out-of-doors; 7 Alder; 8 Mastiff; 10 Farewell; 11 Envy; 13 Throng; 15 Redden; 17 Hold; 18 Catacomb; 21 Diploma; 22 Arena; 23 Department. Down: 1 Order; 2 Throwing; 3 Female; 4 Oust; 5 Reigned; 6 Far-fetched; 9 Flying-boat; 12 Separate; 14 Relapse; 16 Vacant; 19 Overt; 20 Solo.

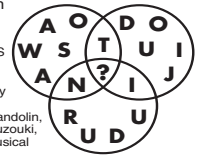
Sudoku



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS:
3 1 6 1 7 2 5 3 8
9 6 1 8 7 5 4 3 2
4 5 2 3 6 9 1 7 8
8 1 9 2 7 3 8 1
5 2 3 4 6 1 9 7 2
8 1 7 9 3 6 2 4 5
9 4 5 8 7 2 3 1
2 3 5 7 1 4 6 9 8
7 8 6 2 9 3 5 1 4

Circlegram

Replace the question mark with a letter so that the letters within each circle can be arranged to form words on a common theme. What are the three words, and the letter represented by the question mark?



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:
The letter represented by the question mark is O. Mandolin, trombone, bouzouki, all types of musical instrument.

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- CRYPTIC CROSSWORDS
- QUICK CROSSWORDS
- CODEWORD SUDOKU
- WORD PUZZLER
- WORD SEARCH
- NUMBER CRUNCH

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The feature fireplace in the lounge has an electric fire

An extended home is for sale at £175,000



The extended and improved semi-detached is available in Sedgley

PRICED to sell at offers over **£175,000**, this extended and improved traditionally styled semi-detached house is in Dumbleberry Avenue, Sedgley.

Conveniently situated for Sedgley centre and all its amenities, the property has uPVC double glazing, gas central heating and cavity wall insulation, and is described as being deceptively spacious.

On the ground floor the lounge, 13ft by 11ft 3in, has a feature fireplace with electric fire, while the rear sitting room is 10ft 11in by 10ft 10in with a patio window into a conservatory which is 10ft 1in by 7ft 12in.

Integrated

The kitchen, 14ft 4in by 6ft 8in, has base and wall cupboards, work surfaces, gas oven and hob with extractor hood over, integrated fridge and dishwasher and breakfast bar.

On the first floor are three bedrooms, one with a shower area including corner cubicle, low-level WC and pedestal wash hand basin, and a bathroom with P-shaped bath with shower over and screen, pedestal wash hand basin and WC.

Outside a garage has plumbing for an automatic washing machine, with the property approached via a block paved driveway and parking area.

There are gardens to the front and rear incorporating decking, paving, shrubs and timber store shed.

For further details contact Wakeman on 01902 885894.

Home with open view

WITH open views on to Kingswinford's King George Park, this extended traditional semi-detached house is for sale at £174,950.

The property in Water Street is described as generously proportioned and beautifully appointed, with four good sized bedrooms including a master bedroom loft conversion with en suite shower room.

On the ground floor the re-fitted dining kitchen has two areas, the dining area and the kitchen itself, fitted with a range of units with roll edge work surfaces, stainless steel sink/drainage with mixer tap, plumbing for automatic washing machine, integrated freezer, four ring gas hob with cooker hood above, double oven and fridge.

The lounge has a living flame gas fire with period style feature fireplace surround with oak wood style mantle and marble style hearth.

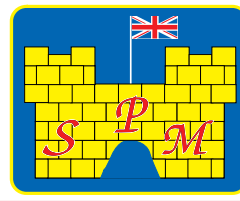
On the first floor are three bedrooms and a re-fitted bathroom. On the second floor the master bedroom has fitted wardrobes and a white en-suite.

Outside is a paved driveway while the rear garden has a block paved patio with steps down to a timber shed, children's playhouse, lawn with border and paved/wood chipped areas.

Contact estate agent Taylors on 01384 401777 for more details.



Taylors is handling the sale of this semi-detached in Water Street



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NEW



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SWINDON

NEW



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PEDMORE

NEW



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WOODSETTON

NEW



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GORNAL



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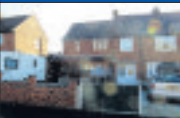


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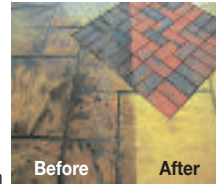
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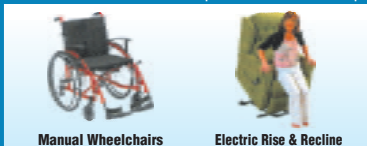
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Four Main Vauxhall Dealers Join Forces To Offer Motorists Affordable Vehicle Winter Care.

Dudley Motor Company, T Wall Garages, Stourbridge Motor House and Halesowen Motor House have joined together to provide low cost winter safety care to motorists throughout the West Midlands. Rob Gilbert, general manager of Dudley Motor Company says, "We recognise the importance of offering drivers affordable solutions to make sure their vehicles are safe and reliable over the winter months. This is of course especially relevant given the increased instances of unexpected and extreme weather conditions experienced over recent years".

The four sites are offering an Anti-



freeze check for just £1.99 plus a free tin of de-icer. The anti-freeze level is something that often gets forgotten about, but really is so important. Anti-freeze is vital to the coolant system of your car and in modern engines it prevents extremes in temperature, both hot and cold. It also prevents electrolysis which causes pitting and corrosion. Over time the concentration of the anti-freeze diminishes and it is vital that it is replenished otherwise the engine may sustain irreversible damage. With this check for just £1.99 you may save yourself a small fortune in the cost of engine repairs.

Another great offer at the moment is their 25 point Winter Safety Check

for only £35 which inspects your vehicle's brakes, tyres, exhaust, steering, wiper blades and much more. They also check your engine oil, brake fluid and radiator coolant, topping up where necessary, up to half a litre. Plus they are currently offering a free Winter Care Pack worth 20 RRP with every Winter Safety Check!

These main Vauxhall dealers are part of a family-run business which has been caring for the motoring needs of people in the West Midlands for almost 60 years. They won the Vauxhall Chairman's Award for excellence in 2011 for customer service and have continued to exceed the expectations of their customers ever since. As well as



superb New and Used car sales facilities they have also built up Service departments that are second to none. Their workshops contain all the latest diagnostic equipment and specialist tools and their technicians are fully trained, so customers can be reassured their vehicles are in the safest hands. They provide quality servicing and MOTs, using high quality parts and oils, for all makes and models of car and at very affordable prices. All the sites are also really happy to help with any concerns or questions you have about your vehicle, so always feel free to pop in and see them. We wish you safe and happy motoring throughout the season.



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Rangers halt run of wins by Lockmen

Black Country Rangers 4 Willenhall Town 1
HIGH-FLYING Black Country Rangers halted Willenhall Town's winning run of five games in the West Midlands Premier.

Rangers' victory means they lead the division by four points, although second-placed Lye have two matches in hand.

The dangerous James McKenzie caused problems for the Rangers back four and was brought down in the box by keeper Luke Tilt. He was sent off and Craig Oldfield fired in from the spot.

McKenzie was denied a second penalty as he appeared to be fouled in the box, but the first half ended with the home side's Liam Hughes skipping past the defence before firing wide.

Willenhall failed to cash in on their extra man advantage in the second half.

Rangers regrouped and the game turned when Callum Haynes, who had handled Hughes well, limped off.

Hughes smashed in a hat-trick in 10 minutes. Rangers added a fourth from David Meese.

Promotion push kept on course

TWO wins and a draw meant a successful week for Stourbridge Chess Club.

The A team beat Boldmere B 4.5-1.5 at home as they push for promotion from Division Two of the Wolverhampton League.

John Loynes scored a very quick win and Steve Jukes drew before successes for Dave Scriven and Jeremy Fallowfield guaranteed the overall victory.

Nick Harris agreed a draw as did John Foxall, who did not have enough time to complete his attack.

All four boards against Boldmere in Division One of the Dudley League were drawn for a 2-2 result.

But Stourbridge enjoyed a 3.5-0.5 win over a weak Hagley team in Worcester League Division Two.

As a bonus, Harris drew his adjourned game against Wolverhampton in Wolverhampton League Division Two to give Stourbridge the match and maintain their 100 per cent record with six wins out of six.

Top of the league spot kept after win

Stourbridge U12 A 3 West Bromwich Colts U12 1
Goals from Rohan Brown, Dylan Multani and Ben Jones gave Stourbridge victory and kept them top of the Midlands Junior Premier League.

Brewood U12 5 Stourbridge U12 B 2
Stourbridge suffered defeat after playing their first game in four weeks.

They went one down inside quarter of an hour, despite some outstanding work from keeper Chris McGrath.

Stourbridge worked hard to get back into the game and equalised just before half-time.

The visitors continued the good work in the second period and took the lead when man of the match Richie Cartwright scored from long range.

The turning point came with a Brewood penalty which was initially missed but retaken due to goalkeeper encroachment.

Brewood scored at the second attempt and then took the lead against the run of play.

Stourbridge went with just two at the back as they tried to salvage the match.

They were caught out twice in the final five minutes to bring a final score of 5-2.

Stourbridge Juniors

Stourbridge U13A 1 Sheffield Hat-trick U13 0

A bright start from Stourbridge saw them take the early initiative only for Sheffield to change their system and get back in the game.

The visitors created some good chances against a nervous and ring-rusty Stourbridge side which had seen matches lost to the weather.

Despite that, the best chance of the half fell to Stourbridge's Ewan Hunter who was only denied by a splendid save from the Sheffield

keeper. The second half was a different story for Stourbridge as they dominated and got the game's only goal when Arron Finnegan's vicious free-kick found the net via the near post.

Stourbridge missed a penalty and three excellent chances, but still managed to take the win.

Stourbridge U13B 4 Halas Hawks U13 1

Round three of League Cup action saw Stourbridge take a deserved victory against a Division One team.

Stourbridge played some good football and march on to the quarter-finals.

The goals came from Liam Hands, Ryan Woodhouse, Brooke Price and man of the match Sam Green.

Stourbridge U16A 3 Sporting Khalsa U16 0

Stourbridge took a good win over a strong Khalsa side.

Chris Horton notched twice and there was a goal for Louis Whitmore.

Stour played some attractive football, especially in the first half, and looked capable of more goals but found the Khalsa keeper in fine form.

Results: Oxford City U15 1 Stourbridge U15A 1; Stourbridge U15B 1 Brandhall U15 2.

Athletic's first time in last 32 is secured

Gornal Athletic 1 Boston Tn 0
GORNAL ATHLETIC made history by marching into the fourth round of the FA Vase.

Matt Weyman's eighth-minute goal was enough to secure a first-ever place in the last 32 for the Midland Alliance outfit as they claimed victory at Garden Walk.

The hosts could have been two goals ahead in the first five minutes. Chances fell to Ricky Nicholls, whose shot flew just wide, and Weyman, whose effort hit the post.

The crucial goal came when Chris Rabone's high ball into the box was spilled by Boston keeper Doug Linberg and Weyman stroked the loose ball into the far corner of the net.

Boston began to edge their way back into the game, but found it hard to find a way through a well-matched Gornal defence.

Once into danger territory, they ran into in-form keeper Matt Martin.

Each side created several chances in the second half, without adding to the scoreline.

So it's Gornal who go through to a fourth-round home tie against Wisbech Town.

Dashing debut for Dubitat

Boldmere St Michaels 1 Tipton Town 2

TIPTON'S best Midland Alliance performance of the season saw new man Dan Dubitat steal the show for 10-man Town.

Town bossed the game for lengthy periods despite defender Jake Foster going off in the 21st minute for bringing down Michael Woolman.

Kirk Smith's curler from the free-kick was saved by Tipton keeper Chris Collins. After Karl Edwards fired just over for Town, Boldmere responded with a volley by Andy Lewis.

Dubitat forced home keeper Lewis Penney to turn his effort aside for a corner from which he skimmed the bar with a forceful header.

In the 51st minute he drove the ball home after being set up by Matt Martin.

In the 62nd minute Dubitat got a second but Woolman pulled one back.

Saxons' bonus point win very well-Hearned

Preston Grasshoppers 23 Stourbridge Saxons 35
SAXONS' Jamie Hearn slotted all three penalties and three of four conversions to give the Saxons a 14th consecutive bonus point win.

Had Preston's league top points scorer Sean Taylor taken his kicking boots it might have been different but nothing should detract from Saxons' performance, particularly the forwards whose physicality let them dominate tight phases.

The opening score followed a Nathan Bressington chip behind the defenders, Sam Baker hacked the ball through before grounding.

A Hearn penalty extended the lead in the National League. Two North game before line-out ball went to Baker who offloaded back inside to Ben Barkley for a nicely-worked try.

Preston responded with a penalty for a half-time 15-3 score but Hearn responded in kind in the opening minute of the second half.

Rapid
Two Preston tries came in rapid succession, the first from a turnover in the tackle as Saxons looked to run the ball out of their own 22.

Preston's winger then managed to deflect and catch a clearance kick to steal the easiest of scores.

A Saxons attacking five-metre scrum saw the Preston pack go back and down leaving the referee to award a penalty try.

Preston got another try from a quick tap but their scrum continued to creak under pressure enabling Hearn to respond with a penalty.

Preston hit back from

Stourbridge Saxons

short range to bring the margin back to five points.

With barely a minute on the clock, the Saxons secured field position in the Preston 22m area.

Following a couple of drives, Ben Hughes managed to stay on his feet in contact and set up a maul.

Nick Adams marshalled the arriving troops and with all but one of the backs flying in as well, it was driven over with Nigel Mukarati scoring the bonus point fourth try in a 12-point victory.

Saxons coach Mike Umaga admitted: "They weren't the best of conditions, but I liked the way we stuck at it, keeping our composure under pressure to first secure the win and then create and seize the bonus-point opportunity."

"This is a very tough place to come; plenty of sides will travel here and be knocked over, so I'm particularly pleased we were able to secure the five points."



Ben Barkley launches a charge at the Preston Grasshoppers' defence during Stourbridge Saxons' 12-point win

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Gornal go for glory and cash

GORNAL manager Ian Rowe is targeting more FA Vase glory – and a welcome cash boost for the club after his side achieved history by marching into the last 32.

Athletic secured a home tie against Wisbech on Saturday, January 19 with last Saturday's 1-0 win over Boston Town.

Prize money from the cup run has already topped £11,000 and another £1,800 is up for grabs if Gornal beat Wisbech.

Rowe believes the Midland Alliance side can achieve more knockout glory. "It's a fantastic opportunity for us – a home tie against a team from our own level," said Rowe, who works as a warehouse manager at a steelworks.

"Hopefully there are a couple more ties in it for us – and we're only four games from Wembley."

"It's fantastic for us as a club – it's further than we've ever been before, and we want to keep it going."

"Winning the West Midlands League was tough, but we've bettered that this season. And to win £11,000 in prize money is fantastic."

Match report – Page 35

Seventh spot with two races left

STOURBRIDGE Running Club's men's team lie seventh in the Birmingham Cross-Country League with two races to run.

Best finisher at Burbage Common, Leicestershire, was Matt Giles – 12th out of 184 in a time of 39min 53sec.

Next was Duncan Cornish with 42.27 and third home was Matt Cooper in 42.36.

In the Midland Women's Cross-Country League, Stourbridge are 26th. Chloe Pearson was best finisher at Burbage in 32:49. Natalie Dellar was on 36:20 and Zoe Yeomans on 38:12.

The women finished fifth in Division Two in the last race of the North Staffordshire Cross-Country league.

Their first home at Westwood High, Leek, was Joan Clarke (Veteran 55) in 28.04sec who also won her age group. Chloe Pearson, ladies club captain, was second in 28.53 and Zoe Yeomans third in 33.49.

Mike Anslow led the men's team, who moved up to 11th place, in 38.52. Dave Sheppard ran in on 43.24.

Chance to hear of new signing and meet team

HEATHENS fans can mix with the team at the club's Christmas party next week.

All five confirmed signings for the 2013 season will attend – and the sixth will be introduced live on stage.

The event is at Cradley Heath Liberal Club, High Street, Cradley Heath, on Friday, December 21.

More than half the capacity has been sold already and the club will also reveal the new 2013 race jacket. A one-off jacket has been produced for the night which will be signed and auctioned.

Chairman Nigel Pearson said of the club's fans: "We want to give them a Christmas

Dudley Heathens

present by introducing another brand new signing for the club. I'm sure the Liberal Club will be packed solid for what should be a great night and a good way for all the Heathens to start Christmas.

"The response to our signings so far has been very positive and this has been a very difficult winter for the management."

"My partners and I agonised over the team building but we knew we had an impossible choice to make and we have had to tear apart a fabulous bunch of riders."

No fewer than three of the 2012 team

have now been snapped up by the Isle of Wight. I'd like to wish Tom Perry, Byron Bekker and Darryl Ritchings all the very best at the Isle of Wight and I'm sure our meetings against them next season will be interesting," added Pearson.

"They are all great lads and have been a delight to have in the Heathens fold. I sincerely hope they will be back in the future."

"I'd also like to wish James White-Williams all the best in whatever he decides to do next and I'm looking forward to Adam Roynon's Benefit Night at the River Rooms in Stourbridge on January 22. That will be a great night."

"But the Christmas party is up next and I know how much our new signing is looking forward to coming along and meeting the fans. It should be a great night."

"And we're also excited about unveiling our new race jacket. We've had one made up just for the night which will be up for auction."

Tickets are available for the event at the club's online shop via the official club website www.dudleyheathens.co or by calling Heathens Speedway Supporters Club, who are hosting the evening alongside the club, on 07766 745681. Tickets are £6 HSSC members and £8 non-members.

United's Vase run ends in a thrashing

Whitley Bay 6 Causeway Utd 0

THIS was one step too far for Causeway as they went out of the FA Vase to four-time winners Whitley Bay, who looked strong and well-organised.

The visitors were always going to be up against it when they went behind on six minutes after a defensive mix-up in the box saw the ball come out to Bradley Brooking, who crashed it home.

Paul Robinson should have doubled the lead just afterwards when goalkeeper Tom Turner parried a close-range low cross into his path, but the Whitley man shot wide.

But it was 2-0 on 15 minutes when Bay's top scorer Paul Chow scored the first of his three goals from close range.

Hat-trick

On 24 minutes, a long ball up to Chow saw him lay it off to James Novak who passed to Robinson and this time he made no mistake.

Robinson could have had a first-half hat-trick, putting one shot wide and hitting the Causeway bar with another.

The one-way traffic continued, but the fourth goal didn't come until 59 minutes when Ashley Davis broke from the halfway line and fed Chow to score.

Robinson crossed for Chow to complete his treble on 62 minutes and Lee Kerr ended the rout on 78 minutes when he converted a cross from Chris Fawcett.

■ Managerless Cradley Town cancelled their West Midland Premier game against Wolverhampton Casuals as they were unable to field a side.

The Chronicle, a Midland News Association Ltd publication, printed by the company at Kettle, Telford, Thursday, December 13, 2012.

GLASSBOYS' HOME HOODOO IS LIFTED

TWO late goals from Sean Geddes and Luke Benbow swept the Glassboys to a stunning victory over Chippenham.

Gary Hackett's Glassboys were without a home league win in the Evo-Stik League Southern Premier Division since early October and that run looked set to continue as the Wiltshire visitors had the better of a physical and rather tetchy first period to lead, deservedly, at the break.

Chippenham went ahead just after the half-hour mark.

A throw-in on the left by Tyrone Mings was headed on by Tom Knighton into the path of Scott Lye who spotted Dean Griffiths in space through the right channel area and Griffiths finished with aplomb with a low drive from the edge of the box into the net.

The visitors twice almost doubled their advantage on the stroke of half-time with Griffiths turning on the edge of the box and hitting a low shot wide of Lewis Solly's left-hand post.

Important

Then a loose pass from Jordan Fitzpatrick enabled the ball to be pushed through the middle to Knighton who was left with only Solly to beat.

However, the Stourbridge keeper closed him down quickly and made an important blocking save.

In the 66th minute the Glassboys made a double change with Sean Evans and debutant Lee Osborne entering the fray.

It was Evans who provided a much-needed spark and turned the match on its head 12 minutes later.

A powerful run into the left-hand side of the box saw the wide-man being sent sprawling by the challenge of Ashley Williams.

Stourbridge 2 Chippenham 1

Ben John got a hand to the resulting spot-kick from Geddes, but could not keep the ball from finding the net.

The momentum swung in favour of the hosts with Benbow pulling the ball back from the byline on 84 minutes for Ben Billingham to see his close-range effort blocked on the line by Williams.

A minute later Geddes played a free-kick to Evans whose ball inside was chested off by Benbow on the edge of the box.

Billingham hit a 20-yard drive that John got safely behind.

Three minutes later a deep cross from the right by Gavin Hurren was headed into the side-netting by Evans at the far post.

Inbetween this time the visitors ran down the clock with two substitutions, but the referee duly added the time on.

In the third minute of stoppage time Billingham slipped the ball to Benbow on the right-hand edge of the box.

The striker grabbed his ninth goal of the campaign with a blistering low drive into the far corner of the net to complete the Glassboys' turnaround.

Will power helps Saxons to win away from home



Will Hurrell attacks for Stourbridge Saxons in their victory over Preston Grasshoppers. Report – Page 35

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